THE

HEIDENMAUER;

OR,

THE BENEDICTINES.

THE

HEIDENMAUER;

OR,

THE BENEDICTINES.

A LEGEND OF THE RHINE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PRAIRIE," "RED ROVER," "BRAVO," &C. &C.

> "From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy,
> Have I not seen what human things could do?"
>
> BYRON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Philadelphia:
CAREY & LEA—CHESTNUT STREET.

1832.

STEREOTYPED BY J. HOWE.

INTRODUCTION.

"I shall crave your forbearance a little; may be, I will call upon you anon, for some advantage to yourself."

Measure for Measure.

CONTRARY to a long-established usage, a summer had been passed within the walls of a large town; but, the moment of liberation arrived, the bird does not quit its cage with greater pleasure, than that with which post-horses were commanded. We were four in a light travelling calêche, which strong Norman cattle transported merrily towards their native province. For a time we quitted Paris, the queen of modern cities, with its tumults and its order; its palaces and its lanes; its elegance and its filth; its restless inhabitants and its stationary politicians; its theories and its practices; its riches and its poverty; its gay and its sorrowful; its rentiers and its patriots; its young liberals and its old illiberals; its three estates and its equality; its delicacy of speech and its strength of conduct; its government of the people and its people of no government; its bayonets and its moral force; its science and its ignorance; its amusements and its revolutions; its resistance that goes backward, and its movement that stands still; its milliners, its philosophers, its opera-dancers, its poets, its fiddlers, its bankers, and its cooks. Although so long enthralled within the barriers, it was not easy to quit Paris, entirely without regret—Paris, which every stranger censures and every stranger seeks; which moralists abhor and imitate; which causes the heads of the old to shake, and the hearts of the young to beat;—Paris, the centre of so much that is excellent, and of so much that cannot be named!

That night we laid our heads on rustic pillows, far from the French capital. The succeeding day we snuffed the air of the sea. Passing through Artois and French Flanders, on the fifth morning we entered the new kingdom of Belgium, by the historical and respectable towns of Douaï, and Tournaï, and

Ath. At every step we met the flag which flutters over the pavilion of the Thuileries, and recognized the confident air and swinging gait of French soldiers. They had just been employed in propping the crumbling throne of the house of Saxe. To us they seemed as much at home as when they lounged on the Quai d'Orsay.

There was still abundant evidence visible at Brussels, of the fierce nature of the struggle that had expelled the Dutch. Forty-six shells were sticking in the side of a single building of no great size, while ninety-three grape-shot were buried in one of its pilasters! In our own rooms, too, there were fearful signs of war. The mirrors were in fragments, the walls broken by langrage, the wood-work of the beds was pierced by shot, and the furniture was marked by rude encounters. The trees of the park were mutilated in a thousand places, and one of the little Cupids, that we had left laughing above the principal gate three years before, was now maimed and melancholy, whilst its companion had altogether taken flight on the wings of a cannon-ball. Though dwelling in the very centre of so many hostile vestiges, we happily escaped the sight of human blood; for we understood from the obliging Swiss who presides over the hotel, that his cellars, at all times in repute, were in more than usual request during the siege. From so much proof we were left to infer, that the Belgians had made stout battle for their emancipation, one sign at least that they merited to be free.

Our road lay by Louvain, Thirlemont, Liège, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Juliers, to the Rhine. The former of these towns had been the scene of a contest between the hostile armies, the preceding week. As the Dutch had been accused of unusual excesses in their advance, we looked out for the signs. How many of these marks had been already obliterated, we could not well ascertain; but those which were still visible gave us reason to think that the invaders did not merit all the opprobrium they had received. Each hour, as life advances, am I made to see how capricious and vulgar is the immortality conferred by a newspaper!

It would be injustice to the ancient Bishopric of Liège to pass its beautiful scenery without a comment. The country

possesses nearly every requisite for the milder and more rural sort of landscape;—isolated and innumerable farm-houses, herds in the fields, living hedges, a waving surface, and a verdure to rival the emerald. By a happy accident, the road runs for miles on an elevated ridge, enabling the traveller to enjoy these beauties at his ease.

At Aix-la-Chapelle we bathed, visited the relics, saw the scene of so many coronations of emperors of more or less renown, sat in the chair of Charlemagne, and went our way.

The Rhine was an old acquaintance. A few years earlier, I had stood upon the sands, at Katwyck, and watched its periodical flow into the North Sea, by means of sluices made in the short reign of the good King Louis, and, the same summer, I had bestrode it, a brawling brook, on the icy side of St. Gothard. We had come now to look at its beauties in its most beautiful part, and to compare them, so far as native partiality might permit, with the well-established claims of our own Hudson.

Quitting Cologne, its exquisite but incomplete cathedral, with the crane that has been poised on its unfinished towers five hundred years, its recollections of Rubens and his royal patroness, we travelled up the stream so leisurely as to examine all that offered, and yet so fast as to avoid the hazard of satiety. Here we met Prussian soldiers, preparing, by mimic service, for the more serious duties of their calling. Lancers were galloping, in bodies, across the open fields; videttes were posted, the cocked pistol in hand, at every hay-stack; while couriers rode, under the spur, from point to point, as if the great strife, which is so menacingly preparing, and which sooner or later must come, had actually commenced. As Europe is now a camp, these hackneyed sights scarce drew a look aside. We were in quest of the interest which nature, in her happier humors, bestows.

There were ruined castles, by scores; gray fortresses; abbeys, some deserted and others yet tenanted; villages and towns; the seven mountains; cliffs and vineyards. At every step we felt how intimate is the association between the poetry of Nature and that of art; between the hill-side with its falling turret, and the moral feeling that lends them interest,

Here was an island, of no particular excellence, but the of a convent of the middle ages crumbled on its surface. There was a naked rock, destitute of grandeur, and wanting in those tints which milder climates bestow, but a baronial hold tottered on its apex. Here Cæsar led his legions to the stream, and there Napoleon threw his corps d'armée on the hostile bank; this monument was to Hoche, and from that terrace the great Adolphus directed his battalions. Time is wanting to mellow the view of our own historical sites; for the sympathy that can be accumulated only by the general consent of mankind, has not yet clothed them with the indefinable colors of distance and convention.

In the mood likely to be created by a flood of such recollections, we pursued our way along the southern margin of this great artery of central Europe. We wondered at the vastness of the Rheinfels, admired the rare jewel of the ruined church at Baccarach, and marvelled at the giddy precipice on which a prince of Prussia even now dwells, in the eagle-like grandeur and security of the olden time. On reaching Mayence, the evening of the second day, we deliberately and, as we hoped, impartially compared what had just been seen, with that which is so well and so affectionately remembered.

I had been familiar with the Hudson from childhood. The great thoroughfare of all who journey from the interior of the state towards the sea, necessity had early made me acquainted with its windings, its promontories, its islands, its cities, and its villages. Even its hidden channels had been professionally examined, and time was when there did not stand an unknown seat on its banks, or a hamlet that had not been visited. Here then was the force of deep impressions to oppose to the influence of objects still visible.

To me it is quite apparent that the Rhine, while it frequently possesses more of any particular species of scenery, within a given number of miles, than the Hudson, has none of so great excellence. It wants the variety, the noble beauty, and the broad grandeur of the American stream. The latter, within the distance universally admitted to contain the finest parts of the Rhine, is both a large and a small river; it has its bays, its narrow passages among the meadows, its frowning gorges,

and its reaches resembling Italian lakes; whereas the most that can be said of its European competitor, is that all these wonderful peculiarities are feebly imitated. Ten degrees of a lower latitude supply richer tints, brighter transitions of light and shadow, and more glorious changes of the atmosphere, to embellish the beauties of our western clime. In islands, too, the advantage is with the Hudson, for, while those of the Rhine are the most numerous, those of the former stream are bolder, better placed, and, in every natural feature, of more account.

When the comparison between these celebrated rivers is extended to their artificial accessories, the result becomes more doubtful. The buildings of the older towns and villages of Europe seem grouped especially for effect, as seen in the distant view, though security was in truth the cause, while the spacious, cleanly, and cheerful villages of America must commonly be entered, to be appreciated. In the other hemisphere, the maze of roofs, the church-towers, the irregular faces of wall, and frequently the castle rising to a pinnacle in the rear, give a town the appearance of some vast and antiquated pile devoted to a single object. Perhaps the boroughs of the Rhine have less of this picturesque, or landscape effect, than the villages of France and Italy, for the Germans regard space more than their neighbors, but still are they less commonplace than the smiling and thriving little marts that crowd the borders of the Hudson. To this advantage must be added that which is derived from the countless ruins, and a crowd of recollections. Here, the superiority of the artificial auxiliaries of the Rhine ceases, and those of her rival come into the ascendant. In modern abodes, in villas, and even in seats, those of princes alone excepted, the banks of the Hudson have scarcely an equal in any region. There are finer and nobler edifices on the Brenta, and in other favored spots, certainly, but I know no stream that has so many that please and attract the eye. As applied to moving objects, an important feature in this comparison, the Hudson has perhaps no rival, in any river that can pretend to a picturesque character. In numbers, in variety of rig, in beauty of form, in swiftness and dexterity of handling, and in general grace and movement, this extra-

ordinary passage ranks amongst the first of the world. The yards of tall ships swing among the rocks and forests of the highlands, while sloop, schooner, and bright canopied steam-boat, yacht, periagua, and canoe are seen in countless numbers, decking its waters. There is one more eloquent point of difference that should not be neglected. Drawings and engravings of the Rhine lend their usual advantages, softening, and frequently rendering beautiful, objects of no striking attractions when seen as they exist; while every similar attempt to represent the Hudson, at once strikes the eye as unworthy of its original.

Nature is fruitful of fine effects in every region, and it is a mistake not to enjoy her gifts, as we move through life, on account of some fancied superiority in this, or that, quarter of the world. We left the Rhine, therefore, with regret, for, in its way, a lovelier stream can scarce be found.

At Mayence we crossed to the right bank of the river, and passing by the Duchies of Nassau and Darmstadt, entered that of Baden, at Heidelberg. Here we sat upon the Tun, examined the castle, and strolled in the alleys of the remarkable garden. Thence we proceeded to Manheim, turning our faces, once more, towards the French capital. The illness of one of the party compelled us to remain a few hours in the latter city, which presented little for reflection, unless it were that this, like one or two other towns we had lately seen, served to convince us, that the symmetry and regularity which render large cities magnificent, cause those that are small to appear mean.

It was a bright autumnal day when we returned to the left bank of the Rhine, on the way to Paris. The wishes of the invalid had taken the appearance of strength, and we hoped to penetrate the mountains which bound the Palatinate on its south-western side, and to reach Kaiserslautern, on the great Napoleon road, before the hour of rest. The main object had been accomplished, and, as with all who have effected their purpose, the principal desire was to be at home. A few posts convinced us that repose was still necessary to the invalid. This conviction, unhappily as I then believed, came too late, for we had already crossed the plain of the Palatinate, and were drawing near to the chain of mountains just mentioned,

which are a branch of the Vosges, and are known in the country as the Haart. We had made no calculations for such an event, and former experience had caused us to distrust the inns of this isolated portion of the kingdom of Bavaria. I was just bitterly regretting our precipitation, when the church-tower of Duerckheim peered above the vineyards; for, on getting nearer to the base of the hills, the land became slightly undulating, and the vine abundant. As we approached, the village or borough promised little, but we had the word of the postilion that the post-house was an inn fit for a king; and as to the wine, he could give no higher eulogium than a flourish of the whip, an eloquent expression of pleasure for a German of his class. We debated the question of proceeding, or of stopping, in a good deal of doubt, to the moment when the carriage drew up before the sign of the Ox. A substantial looking burgher came forth to receive us. There was the pledge of good cheer in the ample development of his person, which was not badly typified by the sign, and the hale hearty character of his hospitality removed all suspicion of the hour of reckoning. If he who travels much is a gainer in knowledge of mankind, he is sure to be a loser in the charities that sweeten life. Constant intercourse with men who are in the habit of seeing strange faces, who only dispose of their services to those that are likely never to need them again, and who, of necessity, are removed from most of the responsibilities and affinities of a more permanent intercourse, exhibits the selfishness of our nature in its least attractive form. Policy may suggest a specious blandishment of air, to conceal the ordinary design on the pocket of the stranger; but it is in the nature of things that the design should exist. The passion of gain, like all other passions, increases with indulgence; and thus do we find those who dwell on beaten roads more rapacious than those in whom the desire is latent, for want of use.

Our host of Duerckheim offered a pledge, in his honest countenance, independent air, and frank manner, of his also being above the usual mercenary schemes of another portion of the craft, who, dwelling in places of little resort, endeavor to take their revenge of fortune, by showing that they look

upon every post-carriage as an especial God-send. He had a garden, too, into which he invited us to enter, while the horses were changing, in a way that showed he was simply desirous of being benevolent, and that he cared little whether we staid an hour or a week. In short, his manner was of an artless, kind, natural, and winning character, that strongly reminded us of home, and which at once established an agreeable confidence that is of an invaluable moral effect. Though too experienced blindly to confide in national characteristics, we liked, too, his appearance of German faith, and more than all were we pleased with the German neatness and comfort, of which there were abundance, unalloyed by the swaggering pretension that neutralizes the same qualities among people more artificial. The house was not a beer-drinking, smoking caravanserai, like many hotels in that quarter of the world, but it had detached pavilions in the gardens, in which the wearied traveller might, in sooth, take his rest. With such inducements before our eyes, we determined to remain, and we were not long in instructing the honest burgher to that effect. The decision was received with great civility, and, unlike the immortal Falstaff, I began to see the prospects of taking "mine ease in mine inn" without having a pocket picked.

The carriage was soon housed, and the baggage in the chambers. Notwithstanding the people of the house spoke confidently, but with sufficient modesty, of the state of the larder, it wanted several hours, agreeably to our habits, to the time of dinner, though we had enjoyed frequent opportunities of remarking that in Germany a meal is never unseasonable. Disregarding hints, which appeared more suggested by humanity than the love of gain, our usual hour for eating was named, and, by way of changing the subject, I asked,—

"Did I not see some ruins, on the adjoining mountain, as we entered the village?"

"We call Duerckheim a city, mein Herr," rejoined our host of the Ox; "though none of the largest, the time has been when it was a capital!"

Here the worthy burgher munched his pipe and chuckled, for he was a man that had heard of such places as London, and

Paris, and Pekin, and Naples, and St. Petersburg, or, haply, of the Federal City itself.

"A capital!—it was the abode of one of the smaller Princes, I suppose; of what family was your sovereign, pray?"

"You are right, mein Herr. Duerckheim, before the French revolution, was a residence (for so the political capitals are called in Germany), and it belonged to the princes of Leiningen, who had a palace on the other side of the city (the place may be about half as large as Hudson, or Schenectady), which was burnt in the war. After the late wars, the sovereign was *médiatisé*, receiving an indemnity in estates on the other side of the Rhine."

As this term of *médiatisé* has no direct synonyme in English, it may be well to explain its signification. Germany, as well as most of Europe, was formerly divided into a countless number of petty sovereignties, based on the principle of feudal power. As accident, or talent, or alliances, or treachery advanced the interests of the stronger of these princes, their weaker neighbors began to disappear altogether, or to take new and subordinate stations in the social scale. In this manner has France been gradually composed of its original, but comparatively insignificant kingdom, buttressed, as it now is, by Brittany, and Burgundy, and Navarre, and Dauphiny, and Provence, and Normandy, with many other states; and, in like manner has England been formed of the Heptarchy. The confederative system of Germany has continued more or less of this feudal organization to our own times. The formation of the empires of Austria and Prussia has, however, swallowed up many of these principalities, and the changes produced by the policy of Napoleon gave the death-blow, without distinction, to all in the immediate vicinity of the Rhine. Of the latter number were the Princes of Leiningen, whose possessions were originally included in the French republic, then in the empire, and have since passed under the sway of the King of Bavaria, who, as the legitimate heir of the neighboring Duchy of Deux Ponts, had a nucleus of sufficient magnitude in this portion of Germany, to induce the congress of Vienna to add to his dominions; their object being to erect a barrier against the future

aggrandizement of France. As the dispossessed sovereigns are permitted to retain their conventional rank, supplying wives and husbands, at need, to the reigning branches of the different princely families, the term *médiatisé* has been aptly enough applied to their situation.

"The young prince was here, no later than last week," continued our host of the Ox; "he lodged in that pavilion, where he passed several days. You know that he is a son of the Duchess of Kent, and half-brother to the young princess who is likely, one day, to be queen of England."

"Has he estates here, or is he still, in any way, connected with your government?"

"All they have given him is in money, or on the other side of the Rhine. He went to see the ruins of the old castle; for he had a natural curiosity to look at a place which his ancestors had built."

"It was the ruins of the castle of Leiningen, then, that I saw on the mountain, as we entered the town?"

"No, mein Herr. You saw the ruins of the Abbey of Limburg; those of Hartenburg, for so the castle was called, lie farther back among the hills."

"What! a ruined abbey, and a ruined castle, too!—Here is sufficient occupation for the rest of the day. An abbey and a castle!"

"And the Heidenmauer, and the Teufelstein."

"How! a Pagan's wall, and a Devil's stone!—You are rich in curiosities!"

The host continued to smoke on philosophically.

"Have you a guide who can take me, by the shortest way, to these places?"

"Any child can do that."

"But one who can speak French is desirable—for my German is far from being classical."

The worthy inn-keeper nodded his head.

"Here is one Christian Kinzel," he rejoined, after a moment of thought, "a tailor who has not much custom, and who has lived a little in France; he may serve your turn."

I suggested that a tailor might find it healthful to stretch his knee-joints.

The host of the Ox was amused with the conceit, and he fairly removed the pipe, in order to laugh at his ease. His mirth was hearty, like that of a man without guile.

The affair was soon arranged. A messenger was sent for Christian Kinzel, and taking my little male travelling companion by the hand, I went leisurely ahead, expecting the appearance of the guide. But, as the reader will have much to do with the place about to be described, it may be desirable that he should possess an accurate knowledge of its locality.

Duerckheim lies in that part of Bavaria, which is commonly called the circle of the Rhine. The king, of the country named, may have less than half a million of subjects in this detached part of his territories, which extends in one course from the river to Rhenish Prussia, and in the other from Darmstadt to France. It requires a day of hard posting to traverse this province in any direction, from which it would appear that its surface is about equal to two-thirds of that of Connecticut. A line of mountains, resembling the smaller spurs of the Alleghanies, and which are known by different local names, but which are a branch of the Vosges, passes nearly through the centre of the district, in a north and south course. These mountains cease abruptly on their eastern side, leaving between them and the river, a vast level surface, of that description which is called "flats," or "bottom land" in America. This plain, part of the ancient Palatinate, extends equally on the other side of the Rhine, terminating as abruptly on the eastern as on the western border. In an air line, the distance between Heidelberg and Duerckheim, which lie opposite to each other on the two lateral extremities of the plain, may a little exceed twenty miles, the Rhine running equi-distant from both. There is a plausible theory, which says that the plain of the Palatinate was formerly a lake, receiving the waters of the Rhine, and of course discharging them by some inferior outlet, until time, or a convulsion of the earth, broke through the barrier of the mountains at Bingen, draining off the waters, and leaving the fertile bottom described. Irregular sand-hills were visible, as we approached Duerckheim, which may go to confirm this supposition, for the prevalence of northerly winds might easily have cast more of these light particles on the

south-western than on the opposite shore. By adding that the eastern face of the mountains, or that next to the plain, is sufficiently broken and irregular to be beautiful, while it is always distinctly marked and definite, enough has been said to enable us to proceed with intelligence.

It would appear that one of the passes that has communicated, from time immemorial, between the Rhine and the country west of the Vosges, issues on the plain through the gorge near Duerckheim. By following the windings of the valleys, the post-road penetrates, by an easy ascent, to the highest ridge, and following the water-courses that run into the Moselle, descends nearly as gradually into the Duchy of Deux Ponts, on the other side of the chain. The possession of this pass, therefore, in the ages of lawlessness and violence, was, in itself, a title to distinction and power; since all who journeyed by it, lay in person and effects more or less at the mercy of the occupant.

On quitting the town, my little companion and myself immediately entered the gorge. The pass itself was narrow, but a valley soon opened to the width of a mile, out of which issued two or three passages, besides that by which we had entered, though only one of them preserved its character for any distance. The capacity of this valley, or basin, as it must have been when the Palatinate was a lake, is much curtailed by an insulated mountain, whose base, covering a fourth of the area, stands in its very centre, and which doubtless was an island when the valley was a secluded bay. The summit of this mountain or island-hill is level, of an irregularly oval form, and contains some six or eight acres of land. Here stand the ruins of Limburg, the immediate object of our visit.

The ascent was exceedingly rapid, and of several hundred feet; reddish free-stone appeared everywhere through the scanty soil, the sun beat powerfully on the rocks; and I was beginning to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of proceeding, when the tailor approached, with the zeal of new-born courage.

"Voici Christian Kinzel!" exclaimed ——, to whom novelty was always an incentive, and who, in his young life, had eagerly mounted Alp and Apennine, Jura and Calabrian hill;

ower, monument, and dome, or whatever else served to raise him in the air; "Allons,—grimpons!"

We scrambled up the hill-side, and, winding among terraces on which the vine and vegetables were growing, soon reached the natural platform. There was a noble view from the summit, but it would be premature to describe it here. The whole surface of the hill furnished evidence of the former extent of the Abbey, a wall having encircled the entire place; but the principal edifices had been built, and still remained, near the longitudinal centre, on the very margin of the eastern precipice. Enough was standing to prove the ancient magnificence of the structure. Unlike most of the ruins which border the Rhine, the masonry was of a workmanlike kind, the walls being not only massive, but composed of the sand-stone just mentioned neatly hewn, for immense strata of the material exist in all this region. I traced the chapel, still in tolerable preservation, the refectory, that never-failing solacer of monastic seclusion, several edifices apparently appropriated to the dormitories, and some vestiges of the cloisters. There is also a giddy tower, of an ecclesiastical form, that sufficiently serves to give a character to the ruins. It was closed, to prevent idlers from incurring foolish risks by mounting the crazy steps; but its having formerly been appropriated to the consecrated bells, was not at all doubtful. There is also a noble arch near, with several of its disjointed stones menacing the head of him who ventures beneath.

Turning from the ruin, I cast a look at the surrounding valley. Nothing could have been softer or more lovely than the near view. That sort of necessity, which induces us to cherish any stinted gift, had led the inhabitants to turn every foot of the bottom land to the best account. No Swiss Alp could have been more closely shaved than the meadows at my feet, and a good deal had been made of two or three rivulets that meandered among them. The dam of a rustic mill threw back the water into a miniature lake, and some zealous admirer of Neptune had established a beer-house on its banks, which was dignified with the sign of the "Anchor!" But the principal object in the interior or upland view, was the ruins of a castle, that occupied a natural terrace, or rather the projection of a

rock, against the side of one of the nearest mountains. The road passed immediately beneath its walls, a short arrow-flight from the battlements, the position having evidently been chosen as the one best adapted to command the ordinary route of the traveller. I wanted no explanation from the guide to know that this was the castle of Hartenburg. It was still more massive than the remains of the Abbey, built of the same material, and seemingly in different centuries; for while one part was irregular and rude, like most of the structures of the middle ages, there were salient towers filled with embrasures, for the use of artillery. One of their guns, well elevated, might possibly have thrown its shot on the platform of the Abbey-hill, but with little danger even to the ruined walls.

After studying the different objects in this novel and charming scene, for an hour, I demanded of the guide some account of the Pagan's Wall and of the Devil's Stone. Both were on the mountain that lay on the other side of the ambitious little lake, a long musket-shot from the Abbey. It was even possible to see a portion of the former, from our present stand; and the confused account of the tailor only excited a desire to see more. We had not come on this excursion without a fit supply of road-books and maps. One of the former was accidentally in my pocket, though so little had we expected anything extraordinary on this unfrequented road, that as yet it had not been opened. On consulting its pages now, I was agreeably disappointed in finding that Duerckheim and its antiquities had not been thought unworthy of the traveller's especial attention. The Pagan's Wall was there stated to be the spot in which Attila passed the winter before crossing the Rhine, in his celebrated inroad against the capital of the civilized world, though its origin was referred to his enemies themselves. In short, it was believed to be the remains of a Roman camp, one of those advanced works of the empire, by which the Barbarians were held in check, and of which the Hun had casually and prudently availed himself, in his progress south. The Devil's Stone was described as a natural rock, in the vicinity of the encampment, on which the Pagans had offered sacrifices. Of course the liberated limbs of the guide were put in requisition, to con-

'uct us to a spot that contained curiosities so worthy of even his exertions.

As we descended the mountain of Limburg, Christian Kinzel lighted the way, by relating the opinions of the country, concerning the places we had seen and were about to see. It would appear by this legend, that when the pious monks were planning their monastery, a compact was made with the Devil to quarry the stones necessary for so extensive a work, and to transport them up the steep acclivity. The inducement held forth to the evil spirit, for undertaking a work of this nature, was the pretence of erecting a tavern, in which, doubtless, undue quantities of Rhenish wine were to be quaffed, cheating human reason, and leaving the undefended soul more exposed to the usual assaults of temptation. It would seem, by the legends of the Rhine, that the monks often succeeded in outwitting the arch foe in this sort of compact, though perhaps never with more signal success than in the bargain in question. Completely deceived by the artifices of the men of God, the father of sin lent himself to the project with so much zeal, that the Abbey and its appendages were completed in a time incredibly short; a circumstance that his employers took good care to turn to account, after their own fashion, by ascribing it to a miracle of purer emanation. By all accounts the deception was so well managed, that notwithstanding his proverbial cunning, the Devil never knew the true destination of the edifice until the Abbey-bell actually rang for prayers. Then, indeed, his indignation knew no bounds, and he proceeded forthwith to the rock in question, with the fell intent of bringing it into the air above the chapel, and, by its fall, of immolating the monks and their altar together, to his vengeance. But the stone was too firmly rooted to be displaced even by the Devil; and he was finally compelled, by the prayers of the devotees, who were now, after their own fashion of fighting, fairly in the field, to abandon this portion of the country in shame and disgrace. The curious are shown certain marks on the rock, which go to prove the violent efforts of Satan, on this occasion, and among others the prints of his form, left by seating himself on the stone, fatigued by useless exertions. The more ingenious even trace, in a sort of groove, evidence of the

position of his tail, during the time the baffled spirit was chewing the cud of chagrin on his hard stool.

We were at the foot of the second mountain when Christian Kinzel ended this explanation.

"And such is your Deurckheim tradition concerning the Devil's Stone?" I remarked, measuring the ascent with the sight.

"Such is what is said in the country, mein Herr," returned the tailor; "but there are people, hereabouts, who do not believe it."

My little travelling companion laughed, and his eyes danced with expectation.

"Allons, grimpons!" he cried again—"Allons voir ce Teufelstein!"

In a suitable time we were in the camp. It lay on an advanced spur of the mountain, a sort of salient bastion made by nature, and was completely protected on every side, but that at which it was joined to the mass, by declivities so steep as to be even descended with some pain. There was the ruin of a circular wall, half a league in extent, the stones lying in a confused pile around the whole exterior, and many vestiges of foundations and intersecting walls within. The whole area was covered with a young growth of dark and melancholy cedars. On the face exposed to the adjoining mountain, there had evidently been the additional protection of a ditch.

The Teufelstein was a thousand feet from the camp. It is a weather-worn rock, that shows its bare head from a high point in the more advanced ranges of the hills. I took a seat on its most elevated pinnacle, and for a moment the pain of the ascent was forgotten.

The plain of the Palatinate, far as eye could reach, lay in the view. Here and there the Rhine and the Neckar glittered, like sheets of silver, among the verdure of the fields, and tower of city and of town, of Manheim, Spires, and Worms, of nameless villages, and of German residences, were as plenty in the scene, as tombs upon the Appian Way. A dozen gray ruins clung against the sides of the mountains of Baden and Darmstadt, while the castle of Heidelberg was visible, in its romantic glen, sombre, courtly, and magnificent. The land-

scape was German, and in its artificial parts slightly Gothic; it wanted the warm glow, the capricious outlines, and seductive beauty of Italy, and the grandeur of the Swiss valleys and glaciers; but it was the perfection of fertility and industry, embellished by a crowd of useful objects.

It was easy for one thus placed, to fancy himself surrounded by so many eloquent memorials of the progress of civilization, of the infirmities and constitution, of the growth and ambition of the human mind. The rock recalled the age of furious superstition and debased ignorance—the time when the country lay in forest, over which the hunter ranged at will, contending with the beast for the mastery of his savage domain. Still the noble creature bore the image of God, and occasionally some master mind pierced the shades, catching glimpses of that eternal truth which pervades Nature. Then followed the Roman, with his gods of plausible attributes, his ingenious and specious philosophy, his accumulated and borrowed art, his concerted and overwhelming action, his love of magnificence, so grand in its effects, but so sordid and unjust in its means, and last, the most impressive of all, that beacon-like ambition which wrecked his hopes on the sea of its vastness, with the evidence of the falsity of his system as furnished in his fall. The memorial before me showed the means by which he gained and lost his power. The Barbarian had been taught, in the bitter school of experience, to regain his rights, and in the excitement of the moment, it was not difficult to imagine the Huns pouring into the camp, and calculating their chances of success, by the vestiges they found of the ingenuity and resources of their foes.

The confusion of misty images that succeeded was an apt emblem of the next age. Out of this obscurity, after the long and glorious reign of Charlemagne, arose the baronial castle, with feudal violence and its progeny of wrongs. Then came the abbey, an excrescence of that mild and suffering religion, which had appeared on earth, like a ray of the sun, eclipsing the factitious brilliancy of a scene from which natural light had been excluded for a substitute of a meretricious and deceptive quality. Here arose the long and selfish strife, between antagonist principles, that has not yet ceased. The

struggle was between the power of knowledge and that of physical force. The former, neither pure nor perfect, descended to subterfuge and deceit; while the latter vacillated between the dread of unknown causes, and the love of domination. Monk and baron came in collision; this secretly distrusting the faith he professed, and that trembling at the consequences of the blow which his own sword had given; the fruits of too much knowledge in one, and of too little in the other, while both were the prey of those incessant and unwearied enemies of the race, the greedy passions.

A laugh from the child drew my attention to the foot of the rock. He and Christian Kinzel had just settled, to their mutual satisfaction, the precise position that had been occupied by the Devil's tail. A more suitable emblem of his country than that boy, could not have been found on the whole of its wide surface. As secondary to the predominant English or Saxon stock, the blood of France, Sweden, and Holland ran, in nearly equal currents, in his veins. He had not far to seek, to find among his ancestors the peaceful companion of Penn, the Huguenot, the Cavalier, the Presbyterian, the follower of Luther and of Calvin. Chance had even deepened the resemblance; for, a wanderer from infancy, he now blended languages in merry comments on his recent discovery. The train of thought that his appearance suggested was natural. It embraced the long and mysterious concealment of so vast a portion of the earth, as America, from the acquaintance of civilized man; its discovery and settlement; the manner in which violence and persecution, civil wars, oppression and injustice, had thrown men of all nations upon its shores; the effects of this collision of customs and opinions, unenthralled by habits and laws of selfish origin; the religious and civil liberty that followed; the novel but irrefutable principle on which its government was based; the silent working of its example in the two hemispheres, one of which had already imitated the institutions that the other was struggling to approach, and all the immense results that were dependent on this inscrutable and grand movement of Providence. I know not indeed but my thoughts might have approached the sublime, had not Christian Kinzel interrupted them, by pointing out the spot where the Devil had kicked the stone, in his anger.

Descending from the perch, we took the path to Deurckheim. As we came down the mountain, the tailor had many philosophical remarks to make, that were chiefly elicited by the forlorn condition of one who had much toil and little food. In his view of things, labor was too cheap, and wine and potatoes were too dear. To what depth he might have pushed reflections bottomed on principles so natural, it is impossible to say, had not the boy started some doubts concerning the reputed length of the Devil's tail. He had visited the Jardin des Plantes at Paris, seen the kangaroos in the Zoological Garden in London, and was familiar with the inhabitants of a variety of caravans encountered at Rome, Naples, Dresden, and other capitals; with the bears of Berne he had actually been on the familiar terms of a friendly visiting acquaintance. Having also some vague ideas of the analogies of things, he could not recall any beast so amply provided with such an elongation of the dorsal bone, as was to be inferred from Christian Kinzel's gutter in the Teufelstein. During the discussion of this knotty point, we reached the inn.

The host of the Ox had deceived us in nothing. The viands were excellent, and abundant to prodigality. The bottle of old Deurckheimer might well have passed for Johannisberger, or for that still more delicious liquor, Steinberger, at London or New-York; and the simple and sincere civility with which every thing was served, gave a zest to all.

It would have been selfish to recruit nature, without thought of the tailor, after so many hours of violent exercise in the keen air of the mountains. He too had his cup and his viands, and when both were invigorated by these natural means, we held a conference, to which the worthy post-master was admitted.

The following pages are the offspring of the convocation held in the parlor of the Ox. Should any musty German antiquary discover some immaterial anachronism, a name misplaced in the order of events, or a monk called prematurely from purgatory, he is invited to wreak his just indignation on Christian Kinzel, whose body and soul may St. Benedict of Limburg protect, for evermore, against all critics.



THE HEIDENMAUER.

CHAPTER I.

Stand you both forth now; stroke your chins, and swear by your beards that I am a knave.——*As You Like It.*

The reader must imagine a narrow and secluded valley, for the opening scene of this tale. The time was that in which the day loses its power, casting a light on objects most exposed, that resembles colors seen through glass slightly stained; a peculiarity of the atmosphere, which, though almost of daily occurrence in summer and autumn, is the source of constant enjoyment to the real lover of nature. The hue meant is not a sickly yellow, but rather a soft and melancholy glory, that lends to the hill-side and copse, to tree and tower, to stream and lawn, those tinges of surpassing loveliness that impart to the close of day its proverbial and soothing charm. The setting sun touched with oblique rays a bit of shaven meadow, that lay in a dell so deep as to owe this parting smile of nature to an accidental formation of the neighboring eminences, a distant mountain crest, that a flock had cropped and fertilized, a rippling current that glided in the bottom, a narrow beaten path, more worn by hoof than wheel, and a vast range of forest, that swelled and receded from the view, covering leagues of a hill-chase, that even tradition had never peopled. The spot was seemingly as retired as if it had been chosen in one of our own solitudes of the wilderness;

while it was, in fact, near the centre of Europe, and in the sixteenth century. But, notwithstanding the absence of dwellings, and all the other signs of the immediate presence of man, together with the wooded character of the scene, an American eye would not have been slow to detect its distinguishing features, from those which mark the wilds of this country. The trees, though preserved with care, and flourishing, wanted the moss of ages, the high and rocking summit, the variety and natural wildness of the western forest. No mouldering trunk lay where it had fallen, no branch had been twisted by the gale and forgotten, nor did any upturned root betray the indifference of man to the decay of this important part of vegetation. Here and there, a species of broom, such as is seen occasionally on the mast-heads of ships, was erected above some tall member of the woods that stood on an elevated point; land-marks which divided the rights of those who were entitled to cut and clip; the certain evidence that man had long before extended his sway over these sombre hills, and that, retired as they seemed, they were actually subject to all the divisions, and restraints, and vexations, which, in peopled regions, accompany the rights of property.

For an hour preceding the opening of our tale, not a sound of any nature, beyond that of a murmuring brook, had disturbed the quiet of the silent little valley, if a gorge so narrow, and in truth so wild, deserved the name. There was not even a bird fluttering among the trees, nor a hawk soaring above the heights. Once, and for a minute only, did a roebuck venture from its cover, and descend to the rivulet to drink. The animal had not altogether the elastic bound, the timid and irresolute movement, nor the wandering eye of our own deer, but it was clearly an inhabitant of a forest; for

while it in some degree confided in the protection, it also distrusted the power of man. No sooner was its thirst assuaged, than listening with the keenness of an instinct that no circumstances of accidental condition could destroy, it went up the acclivity again, and sought its cover with troubled steps. At the same instant, a grayhound leaped from among the trees, on the opposite side of the gorge, into the path, and began bounding back and forth, in the well-known manner of that species of dog, when exercising in restlessness, rather than engaged in the hot strife of the chase. A whistle called the hound back from its gambols, and its master entered the path.

A cap of green velvet, bearing a hunting-horn above the shade, a coarse but neat frock of similar color, equally ornamented with the same badge of office, together with the instrument itself suspended from a shoulder, and the arms usual to one of that class, denoted a forester, or an individual charged with the care of the chase, and otherwise intrusted with a jurisdiction in the forest; functions that would be much degraded by the use of the abused and familiar term of gamekeeper.

The forester was young, active, and, notwithstanding the rudeness of his attire, of a winning exterior. Laying his fusee against the root of a tree, he whistled in the dog, and renewing the call, by means of a shrill instrument that was carried for that purpose, he soon succeeded in bringing its fellow to his side. Coupling the grayhounds in a leash, which he attached to his own person, he threw the horn from its noose, and blew a lively and short strain, that rolled up the valley in mellow and melodious notes. When the instrument was removed from his lips, the youth listened till the last of the distant echoes was done, as if expecting some reply. He was not disappointed. Presently an answering

blast came down the gorge, ringing among the woods, and causing the hearts of many of its tenants to beat quick and fearfully. The sounds of the unseen instrument were far more shrill and wild than those of the hunting horn, while they wanted not for melancholy sweetness. They appeared both familiar and intelligible to the young forester, who no sooner heard them, than he slung the horn in its usual turn of the cord, resumed the fusee, and stood in an attitude of expectation.

It might have been a minute before another youth appeared in the path, higher in the gorge, and advancing slowly towards the forester. His dress was rustic, and altogether that of a peasant, while in his hand he held a long, straight, narrow tube of cherry wood, firmly wrapped with bark, having a mouth-piece and a small bell at the opposite end, resembling those of a trumpet. As he came forward, his face was not without an expression of ill humor, though it was rather rendered comic than grave, by a large felt hat, the front rim of which fell in an enormous shade above his eyes, rendering the trim cock in the rear, ludicrously pretending. His legs, like those of the forester, were encased in a sort of leathern hose, that left the limbs naked and free below the knee, while the garment above set so loosely and unbuttoned above that important joint, as to offer no restraint to his movements.

"Thou art behind thy time, Gottlob," said the young forester, as the boor approached, "and the good hermit will not give us better welcome for keeping him from prayer. What has become of thy herd?"

"That may the holy man of the Heidenmauer declare, for it is more than I could answer were Lord Emich himself to put the question, and say, in the manner he is wont to use to the Abbot of Limburg—what hath become of thy herd, Gottlob?"

"Nay, this is no trifling matter, if thou hast, in sooth, let the cattle stray! Where hadst thou the beasts last in sight?"

"Here in the forest of Hartenburg, Master Berchthold, on the honor of an humble servitor of the Count."

"Thou wilt yet lose this service, Gottlob, by thy carelessness!"

"It would be a thousand pities were thy words to be true, for in that case Lord Emich would lose the honestest cow-herd in Germany, and it would go near to break my heart were the friars of Limburg to get him! But the beasts cannot be far, and I will try the virtue of the horn once more, before I go home to a broken head and a discharge. Dost thou know, Master Berchthold, that the disgrace of which thou speakest never yet befell any of my family, and we have been keepers of cattle longer than the Friedrichs have been electors!"

The forester made an impatient gesture, patted his hounds, and waited for the effects of the new blast, that his companion was by this time preparing to sound. The manner of Gottlob was that of entire confidence in his own knowledge of his calling, for notwithstanding his words, his countenance at no time betrayed uneasiness for the fate of his trust. The valley was soon ringing with the wild and plaintive tones of the cherry-wood horn, the hind taking care to give the strains those intonations, which, by a mute convention, had from time immemorial been understood as the signal for collecting a lost herd. His skill and faith were soon rewarded, for cow after cow came leaping out of the forest, as he blew his air, and ere long the necessary number of animals were in the path, the younger beasts frisking along the way, with elevated tails and awkward bounds, while the more staid contributors of the dairy hurried on, with business-like air,

but grave steps, as better became their years and their characters in the hamlet. In a few minutes they were all collected around the person of the keeper, who having counted his charge, shouldered his horn, and disposed himself to proceed towards the lower extremity of the gorge.

"Thou art lucky to have gotten the beasts together, with so little trouble, Gottlob," resumed the forester, as they followed in the train of the herd.

"Say dexterous, Master Berchthold, and do not fear to make me vain-glorious. In the way of understanding my own merits there is little danger of doing me harm. Thou shouldest never discourage modesty, by an over-scrupulous discretion. It would be a village miracle, were a herd so nurtured in the ways of the church to forget its duty!"

The forester laughed, but he looked aside, like one who would not see that to which he wished to be blind.

"At thy old tricks, friend Gottlob! Thou hast let the beasts roam upon the range of the friars!"

"I have paid Peter's pence, been to the chapel of St. Benedict for prayer, confessed to Father Arnolph himself, and all within the month: what more need a man do, to be in favor with the Brothers?"

"I could wish to know if thou ever entertainest Father Arnolph with the history of thy visits to the pastures of the convent, with Lord Emich's herd, honest Gottlob."

"So! Dost thou fancy, Master Berchthold, that, at a moment when there is every necessity to possess a calm and contemplative spirit, I should strive to put the pious monk in a passion, by relating all the antics of some ill-bred cow, or of a heifer, who is as little to be trusted without a keeper, as your jung-frau before she reaches the years of caution is to be trusted at a fair without her mother, or a sharp-sighted old aunt, at the very least!"

"Well, have a care, Gottlob, for Lord Emich, though loving the friars so little, will be apt to order thee into a dungeon, on bread and water for a week, or to make thy back acquainted with the lash, should he come to hear that one of his hinds has taken this liberty with the rights of a neighbor."

"Let Lord Emich then expel the brotherhood from the richest pasturage near the Jaegerthal. Flesh and blood cannot bear to see the beasts of a noble digging into the earth with their teeth, after a few bitter herbs, while the carrion of a convent are rolling the finest and sweetest grasses over their tongues. Look you, Master Berchthold, these friars of Limburg eat the fattest venison, drink the warmest wine, and say the shortest prayers of any monks in Christendom! Potz-Tausend! There are some who accuse them, too, of shriving the prettiest girls! As for bread and water, and a dungeon, I know from experience that neither of the remedies agrees with a melancholy constitution, and I defy the Emperor, or even the Holy Father himself, to work such a miracle, as to make back of mine acquainted with the lash."

"Simply because the introduction hath long since had place."

"That is thy interpretation of the matter, Master Berchthold, and I wish thee joy of a quick wit. But we are getting beyond the limits of the forest, and we will dismiss the question to another conversation. The beasts are full, and will not disappoint the dairy girls, and little matters it whence the nourishment comes—Lord Emich's pastures or a churchly miracle. Thou hast hunted the dogs lightly to-day, Berchthold?"

"I have had them on the mountains for air and movement. They got away on the heels of a roebuck, for a short run, but as all the game in this

chase belongs to our master, I did not see fit to let them go faster than there was need."

"I rejoice to hear thee say it, for I count upon thy company in climbing the mountain when our work is ended; thy legs will only be the fresher for the toil."

"Thou hast my word, and I will not fail thee; in order that no time be lost, we will part here to meet again in the hamlet."

The forester and the cow-herd made signs of leave-taking, and separated. The former quitted the public road, turning short to the right by a private way, which led him across narrow meadows, and the little river that glided among them, towards the foot of the opposite mountain. Gottlob held on his course to a hamlet that was now visible, and which completely filled a narrow pass in the valley, at a point where the latter made a turn, nearly at a right angle with its general direction.

The path of the former led him to an habitation very different from the rude dwellings towards which the steps of the cow-herd tended. A massive castle occupied a projecting point of the mountain, overhanging the cluster of houses in the gorge, and frowning upon all that attempted the pass. The structure was a vast but irregular pile. The more modern parts were circular salient towers, that were built upon the uttermost verge of the rock, from whose battlements it would not have been difficult to cast a stone into the road, and which denoted great attention to strength in their masonry, while beauty of form and of workmanship, as they were understood at the period of which we write, were not entirely neglected. These towers, though large, were mere appendages to the main building, which, seen from the position now before the mind of the reader, presented a confused maze of walls, chimneys, and roofs. In some places, the former rose

from the greensward which covered the hill-side; while in others, advantage had been taken of the living rock, which was frequently so blended with the pile it supported, both being of the same reddish free-stone, that it was not easy at the first glance to say, what had been done by nature and what by art.

The path of the forester led from the valley up the mountain, by a gradual and lateral ascent to a huge gate, that opened beneath a high arch, communicating with a court within. On this side of the castle there was neither ditch, nor bridge, nor any other of the usual defences, beyond a portcullis, for the position of the hold rendered these precautions in a measure unnecessary. Still great care had been taken to prevent a surprise, and it would have required a sure foot, a steady head, and vigorous limbs, to have effected an entrance into the edifice, by any other passage than its gate.

When Berchthold reached the little terrace that lay before the portal, he loosened his horn, and, standing on the verge of the precipice, blew a hunting strain, apparently in glee. The music echoed among the hills as suited the spot, and more than one crone of the hamlet suspended her toil, in dull admiration, to listen to its wild effect. Replacing the instrument, the youth spoke to his hounds and passed beneath the portcullis, which happened to be raised at the moment.

CHAPTER II.

"What sayest thou to a hare, or the melancholy of moor-ditch?"
King Henry IV.

The light had nearly disappeared from the gorge, in which the hamlet of Hartenburg lay, when Berchthold descended from the castle, by a path different from that by which he had entered it an hour before, and crossing the rivulet by a bridge of stone, he ascended the opposite bank into the street, or rather the road. The young forester having kennelled the hounds, had laid aside his leash and fusee, but he still kept the horn suspended from his shoulder. At his side, too, he carried a couteau-de-chasse, a useful instrument of defence in that age and country, as well as a weapon he was entitled to carry, in virtue of his office under the Count of Lienengen-Hartenburg, the master of the hold he had just quitted, and the feudal lord of most of the adjoining mountains, as well as of sundry villages on the plain of the Palatinate. It would seem that the cow-herd expected his associate, or perhaps we might venture to call him friend, for such in truth did he appear to be, by the easy terms on which they met. Gottlob was in waiting near the cottage of his mother, and when the two joined each other, they communicated by a sign, and proceeded with swift steps, leaving the cluster of houses.

Immediately on quitting the hamlet, the valley expanded, and took that character of fertility and cultivation, which has been described to the reader in the Introduction; for all who have perused that opening and necessary preface to our labors, will at once recognize that the two youths introduced to their acquaintance, were now in the mountain basin

which contained the Abbey of Limburg. But three centuries, while they have effected little in altering the permanent features of the place, have wrought essential changes in those which were more perishable.

As the young men moved swiftly on, the first rays of the moon touched the tops of the mountains, and ere they had gone a mile, always holding the direction of the pass which communicated with the valley of the Rhine, the towers and roofs of the Abbey itself were illuminated. The conventual buildings were then perfect, resembling, by their number and confusion, the grouping of some village, while a strong and massive wall encircled the entire brow of the isolated hill. The construction resembled one of those warlike ecclesiastical princes of the middle ages, who wore armor beneath the stole; for while the towers and painted windows, the pious memorials and votive monuments, denoted the objects of the establishment, the defences betrayed that as much dependence was placed on human as on other means, for the protection of those who composed the brotherhood.

"There is a moon for a monk as well as for a cow-herd, it would seem," observed Gottlob, speaking however in a voice subdued nearly to a whisper. "There comes the light upon the high tower of the Abbey, and presently it will be glistening on the bald head of every straggler of the convent, who is abroad tasting the last vintage, or otherwise prying into the affairs of some burgher of Deurckheim!"

"Thou hast not much reverence for the pious fathers, honest Gottlob; for it is seldom thou lettest opportunity pass to do them an ill turn, with tongue or hungry beast."

"Look you, Berchthold, we vassals are little more than so much clear water in which our master

may see his own countenance, and at need his own humors. Whenever Lord Emich has a sincere hatred for man or horse, dog or cat, town or village, monk or count, I know not why it is so, but I feel my own choler rise, until I am both ready and willing to strike when he striketh, to curse when he curseth, and even to kill when he killeth."

"'Tis a good temper for a servitor, but it is to be hoped, for the sake of Christian credit, that the sympathy does not end here, but that thy affections are as social as thy dislikes."

"More so, as there is faith in man! Count Emich is a huge lover of a venison pasty of a morning, and I feel a yearning for it the day long—Count Emich will dispatch you a bottle of Deurckheim in an hour, whereas two would scarce show my zeal for his honor in the same time; and as for other mortifications of this nature, I am not the man to desert my master for want of zeal."

"I believe thee, Gottlob," said Berchthold laughing, "and even more than thou canst find words to say in thine own favor, on topics like these. But, after all, the Benedictines are churchmen, and sworn to their faith and duty, as well as any bishop in Germany; and I do not see the cause of all the dislike of either lord or vassal."

"Ay, thou art in favor with some of the fraternity, and it is rare that the week passes in which thou art not kneeling before some of their altars; but with me the case is different, for since the penance commanded for that affair of dealing a little freely with one of their herds, I have small digestion for their spiritual food."

"And yet thou hast paid Peter's pence, said thy prayers, and confessed thy sins to Father Arnolph, and all within the month!"

"What wouldst thou have of a sinner? I gave the money on the promise of having it back with usury;

I prayed on account of an accursed tooth that torments me, at times, in a manner worse than a damned soul is harrowed; and as to confession, ever since my uncommon candor, concerning the herd, got me into that penance, I confess under favor of a proper discretion. To tell the truth, Master Berchthold, the church is something like a two-year old wife; pleasant enough when allowed her own way, but a devil of a vixen when folded against her will."

The young forester was thoughtful and silent, and as they were now in the vicinity of the hamlet which belonged to the friars of Limburg, his loquacious and prurient companion saw fit to imitate his reserve, from a motive of prudence. The little artificial lake mentioned in the Introduction was in existence, at the time of our tale; but the inn, with the ambitious sign of the anchor, is the fruit of far more modern enterprise. When the young men reached a ravine, that opened into the mountain near the present site of this tavern, they turned aside from the high road, first taking care to observe that no curious eye watched their movements.

Here commenced a long and somewhat painful ascent, by means of a rough path, that was only lighted in spots by the rising moon. The vigorous limbs of the forester and the cow-herd, however, soon carried them to the summit of the most advanced spur of the adjoining mountain, where they arrived upon an open heath-like plain. Although the discourse between them had been maintained during the ascent, it was in more subdued tones even than when beneath the walls of Limburg, the spirits of Gottlob appearing to ooze away the higher he mounted.

"This is a dreary and a courage-killing waste, Berchthold," whispered the cow-herd, as his foot touched the level ground; "and it is even more disheartening to enter on it by the aid of the moon,

than in the dark. Hast ever been nearer to the Teufelstein, at this hour?"

"I came upon it once at midnight; for it was there I made acquaintance with him that we are now about to visit—Did I never relate the manner of that meeting?"

"What a habit hast thou of taxing a memory! Perhaps if thou wert to repeat it, I might recall the facts by the time thou wert ended; and to speak truth, thy voice is comfortable on this sprite's common."

The young forester smiled, but without derision, for he saw that his companion, spite of his indifference to all grave subjects, was, as is generally the case, the most affected of the two when put to a serious trial, and perhaps he also remembered the difference that education had made in their powers of thinking. That he did not treat the subject as one of light import himself, was also apparent by the regulated and cautious manner in which he delivered the following account.

"I had been on the chases of Lord Emich since the rising of the sun," commenced Berchthold, "for there was need of more than common vigilance to watch the neighboring boors. The search had led me far into the hills, and the night came, not as it is now seen, but so pitchy dark, that, accustomed as I was from childhood to the forest, it was not possible to tell the direction of even a star, much less that of the Castle. For hours I wandered, hoping at each moment to reach the opening of the valley, when I found myself of a sudden in a field that appeared endless and uninhabited."

"Ay—That was this devil's ball-room!—thou meanest untenanted by man."

"Hast thou ever known the helplessness of being lost in the forest, Gottlob?"

"In my own person, never, Master Berchthold;

but in that of my herd, it is a misfortune that often befalls me, sinner that I am!"

"I know not that sympathy with thy cows can teach thee the humiliation and depression that come over the mind, when we stand on this goodly earth, cut off from all communication with our fellows, in a desert, though surrounded by living men, deprived of the senses of sight and hearing for useful ends, and with all the signs of God before the eyes, and yet with none of the common means of enjoying his bounty, from having lost the clue to his intentions."

"Must the teeth, of necessity, be idle, or the throat dry, Master Forester, because the path is hid?"

"At such a moment the appetites are quieted, in the grand desire to return to our usual communication with the earth. It is like being restored to the helplessness of infancy, with all the wants and habits of manhood besetting the character and wishes."

"If thou callest such a condition a restoration, friend Berchthold, I shall make interest with St. Benedict that I may remain deposed to the end of my days."

"I weigh not the meaning of every word I utter, with the recollection of that helpless moment so fresh. But it was when the desolate feeling was strongest, that I roved out of the chase upon this mountain heath; there appeared something before my sight, that seemed a house, and by a bright light that glittered, as I fancied, at a window, I felt again restored to intercourse with my kind."

"Thou usest thy terms with more discretion now," said the cow-herd, fetching a heavy breath, like one who was glad the difficulty had found a termination. "I hope it was the abode of some substantial tenant of Lord Emich, who was not without the means of comforting a soul in distress."

"Gottlob, the dwelling was no other than the

Teufelstein, and the light was a twinkling star, that chance had brought in a line with the rock."

"I take it for granted, Master Berchthold, thou didst not knock twice for admission at that door!"

"I am not much governed by the vulgar legends and womanish superstitions of our hills, but——"

"Softly—softly—friend forester; what thou callest by names so irreverent, are the opinions of all who dwell in or about Deurckheim; knight or monk —burgher or count, has equally a respect for our venerable traditions. Tausand Sechs und Zwanziges! what would become of us, if we had not a gory tale, or some alarming and reverend spectacle of this sort, to set up against the penances, and prayers, and masses of the Friars of Limburg!—As much wisdom and philosophy as thou wilt, foster-brother of mine, but leave us our Devil, if it be only to make battle against the Abbot!"

"Notwithstanding thy big words, I well know that none among us has, at heart, a greater dread of this very hill than thyself, Gottlob! I have seen thee sweat cold drops from thy forehead, in crossing the heath after night-fall."

"Art quite sure 'twas not the dew? We have heavy falls of that moisture in these hills, when the earth is parched!"

"Let it then be the dew."

"To oblige thee, Berchthold, I would willingly swear it was a water-spout. But what didst thou make of the rock and the star?"

"I could change the nature of neither. I pretend not to thy indifference to the mysterious power that rules the earth, but thou well knowest that fear never yet kept me from this hill. When a near approach showed me my error, I was about to turn away, not without crossing myself and repeating an Ave, as I am ready to acknowledge; but a

glance upward convinced me that the stone was occupied——"

"Occupied?—I have always known that it was possessed, but never before did I think it was occupied!"

"There was one seated on its uppermost projection, as plainly to be seen as the rock itself."

"Whereupon thou madest manifest that good speed which has gained thee the favor of the Count, and thy post of forester."

"I hope the nerve to put the duties of my office in practice, had their weight with Lord Emich," rejoined Berchthold, a little quickly. "I did not run, Gottlob, but I spoke to the being who had chosen a seat so remarkable, and at that late hour."

Spite of his spirits and affected humor, the cowherd unconsciously drew nearer to his companion, casting at the same time an oblique glance in the direction of the suspected rock.

"Thou seemest troubled, Gottlob."

"Dost thou think I am without bowels? What, shall a friend of mine be in this strait, and I not troubled! Heaven save thee, Berchthold, were the best cow in my herd off her stomach, I could not be in greater concern. Hadst any answer?"

"I had—and the result has gone to show me," returned the forester, musing as he spoke, like one who was obtaining glimpses of long-concealed truth, "that our fears oftentimes prevent us from seeing things as they are, and are the means of nourishing our mistakes. I got an answer, and certainly, contrary to what most in Deurckheim would have believed, it was given in a human voice."

"That was encouraging, though it were hoarser than the roaring of a bull!"

"It spoke mildly and in reason, Gottlob, as thou wilt readily believe, when I tell thee it was no other than the voice of the Anchorite of the Cedars.

Our acquaintance then and there commenced, since which time, as thou knowest well, it hath not flagged for want of frequent visits to his abode, on my part."

The cow-herd walked on in silence, for more than a minute, and then stopping short, he abruptly addressed his companion:—

"And this then hath been thy secret, Berchthold, concerning the manner of commencing on thy new friendship."

"There is no other. I well knew how much thou wert fettered by the opinions of the country, and was afraid of losing thy company in these visits, were I, without caution, to tell all the circumstances of our interview. But now thou hast become known to the anchorite, I do not fear thy desertion."

"Never count upon too many sacrifices from thy friends, Master Berchthold! The mind of man is borne upon by so many fancies, is ruled by so many vagaries, and tormented by so many doubts, when there is question concerning the safety of the body, to say nothing of the soul, that I know no more rash confidence, than to count too securely on the sacrifices of a friend."

"Thou knowest the path, and can return by thyself, to the hamlet, if thou wilt," said the forester peevishly, and not without severity.

"There are situations in which it is as difficult to go back as to go forward," observed Gottlob; "else, Berchthold, I might take thee at thy word, and go back to my careful mother, a good supper, and a bed that stands between a picture of the Virgin, one of St. Benedict, and one of my Lord the Count. But for my concern for thee, I would not go another foot towards the camp."

"Do as thou wilt," said the forester, who appeared, however, to know the apprehension his companion felt of being left alone in that solitary and suspected spot, and who turned his advantage to good

account, by quickening his pace in such a manner as would soon have left Gottlob to his own thick-coming fancies, had he not diligently imitated his gait. "Thou canst tell the people of Lord Emich, that thou abandoned me on this hill."

"Nay," returned Gottlob, making a merit of necessity, "if I do that, or say that, may they make a Benedictine of me, and the Abbot of Limburg to boot!"

As the cow-herd, who felt all his master's antipathies against their religious neighbors, expressed this determination in a voice strong as his resolution, confidence was restored between the friends, who continued their progress with swift paces. The place was, sooth to say, one every way likely to quicken any dormant seeds of superstition that education, or tradition, or local opinions had implanted in the human breast.

By this time our adventurers had approached a wood of low cedars, which, apparently encircled in a round wall that was composed of a confused but vast pile of fallen stones, grew upon the advanced spur of the hills. Behind them lay the heath-like plain, while the bald rock which the moon-beams had just lighted, raising its head from out of the earth, resembled some gloomy monument placed in the centre of the waste, to mark and to render obvious, by comparison, the dreary solitude of the naked fields. The back-ground was the dark slopes and ridges of the forest of the Haart mountains. On their right was the glen, or valley, from which they had just ascended; and on their front, looking a little obliquely from the grove, the plain of the Palatinate, which lay in misty obscurity, like a dim sea of cultivation, hundreds of feet beneath their elevated stand.

It was rare, indeed, that any immediate dependant of the Count Emich, and more especially any of

those who dwelt in or about his castle, and who were likely to be called into his service at an unexpected moment, ventured so far from the fortress, and in the direction of the hostile Abbey, without providing himself with the means of offence and defence. Berchthold wore, as wont, his hunting-knife, or the short straight sword, which to this day is carried by that description of European dependant called a chasseur, and who is seen, degraded to the menial offices of a footman, standing behind the carriages of ambassadors and princes, reminding the observant spectator of the regular and certain decadency of the usages of feudal times. Neither had Gottlob been neglectful of his personal security, as respects human foes; for on the subject of resisting all such attacks, his manhood was above reproach, as had been proved in more than one of those bloody frays, which in that age were of frequent occurrence between the vassals of the minor German princes. The cow-herd had provided himself with a heavy weapon that his father had often wielded in battle, and which needed all the vigor of the muscular arm of the son, to flourish with a due observance of the required positions and attitudes. Fire-arms were of too much value and of too imperfect use to be resorted to on every light occasion, like that which had now drawn the foster-brothers, for such supported by long habit was the secret of the intimacy between the forester and the cow-herd, from their hamlet to the hill of Deurckheim.

Berchthold loosened his couteau-de-chasse, as he turned by an ancient gate-way, whose position was known merely by an interruption of the ditch that had protected this face of the wall, and an opening in the wall itself, to enter the inclosure, which the reader will at once recognize as the Pagan's Camp of the Introduction. At the same moment Gottlob cast his heavy weapon from his shoulder, and

grasped its handle in a more scientific manner. There was certainly no enemy visible to justify these movements, but the increasing solitude of the place, and that impression of danger which besets the faculties, when we find ourselves in situations favorable to deeds of violence, probably induced the double and common caution. The light of the moon, which was not yet full, had not sufficient power to penetrate the thick branches of the cedars; and when the youths were fairly beneath the gloomy foliage, although not left in the ordinary darkness of a clouded night, they were perhaps in that very species of dull and misty illumination, which, by leaving objects uncertain while visible, is the best adapted to undermine the confidence of a distrustful spirit. There was little wind, but the sighs of the night air were plaintively audible, while the adventurers picked their way among the fragments of the place.

It has been elsewhere said, that the Heidenmauer was originally a Roman camp. The warlike and extraordinary people who had erected these advanced works on the remotest frontier of their wide empire, had, of course, neglected none of the means that were necessary, under the circumstances, either for their security or for their comfort. The first had been sufficiently obtained by the nearly isolated position of the hill, protected, as it was, by walls so massive and so high as those must have been, which had consumed the quantity of materials still visible in the large circuit that remained; while the interior furnished abundant proofs that the latter had not been neglected, in its intersecting remains, over which Gottlob more than once stumbled, as he advanced into the shadows of the place. Here and there, a ruined habitation, more or less dilapidated, was still standing, furnishing, like the memorable remains of Pompeii and Herculaneum, inter-

esting and infallible evidence of the usages of those who have so long since departed to their eternal rest. It would seem, by the rude repairs which rather injured than embellished these touching, though simple monuments of what the interior of the camp had been in its day of power and pride, that modern adventurers had endeavored to turn them to account, by converting the falling huts into habitations appropriated to their own temporary uses. All, however, appeared to have been long before finally abandoned; for as Berchthold and his companion stole cautiously among the crumbling stones, the gaping rents and roofless walls denoted hopeless decay. At length the youths paused, and fastened their looks in a common direction, as if apprized that they were near the goal of their expedition.

In a part of the grove, where the cedars grew more dense and luxuriant than on most of that stony and broken soil, stood a single low building, which, of all there, had the air of being still habitable. Like the others, it either had been originally constructed by the masters of the world, or restored on the foundations of some Roman construction by the followers of Attila, who, it will be remembered, had passed a winter in this camp; and it was now rendered weather-proof by the usual devices of the poor and laborious. There was a single window, a door, and a rude chimney, which the climate and the elevated situation of the place rendered nearly indispensable. The light of a dim torch shone through the former, the only sign that the hut was tenanted; for on the exterior, with the exception of the rough repairs just mentioned, all around it lay in the neglected and eloquent stillness of ruin. The reader will not imagine, in this description, any of that massive grandeur which so insensibly attaches itself to most that is connected with the Roman name; for while, in the nature of things, the most

ponderous and the most imposing of the public works of that people are precisely those which are the most likely to have descended to our own times, the traveller often meets with memorials of their power, that are so frail and perishable in their construction, as to owe their preservation, in a great measure, to an accidental combination of circumstances favorable to such a result. Still, the Roman was ordinarily as much greater in little things, if connected with a public object, as he excelled all who have succeeded him, in those which were of more importance. The Ringmauer, or Heidenmauer, is a strong proof of what we say. There is not an arch, nor a tomb, nor a gate, nor a paved road of any description in the vicinity of Deurckheim, to show that the post was more than a temporary military position; and yet the presence of its former occupants is established by more evidence than would probably be found, a century hence, were half of the present cities of Christendom to be suddenly abandoned. But these evidences are rude, and suited to the objects which had brought them into existence.

The forester and the cow-herd stood long regarding the solitary hut, which had arrested their looks, like men hesitating to proceed.

"I had more humor for the company of the honest anchorite, Master Berchthold," said the latter, "before thou madest me acquainted with his fondness for taking the night air on the Teufelstein."

"Thou hast not fear, Gottlob? Thou, who bearest so good a name for courage among our youths!"

"I shall be the last to accuse myself of cowardice, or of any other discreditable quality, friend forester; but prudence is a virtue in a youth, as the Abbot of Limburg himself would swear, were he here——"

"He is not present in his own reverend and respected person," said a voice so nigh the car of

Gottlob, as to cause him to jump nimbly aside; "but one who may humbly represent some portion of his sanctity, is not wanting to affirm the truth of what thou sayest, son."

The startled young men saw that a monk of the opposite mountain had unexpectedly appeared between them. They were on the lands of the Abbey, or rather on ground in dispute between the burghers of Deurckheim and the convent, but actually in possession of the latter; and they felt the insecurity of their situation as the dependants of the count of Hartenburg. Neither spoke, therefore, for each was striving to invent some plausible pretext for his appearance in a place so unfrequented, and which, in general, was held in so little favor by the neighboring peasantry.

"You are youths of Deurckheim?" asked the monk, endeavoring to observe their features by the imperfect light that penetrated the foliage of the dark cedars. Gottlob, whose besetting infirmity was a too exuberant fluency of tongue, took on himself the task of answering.

"We are youths, reverend father," he said, "as thy quick and sagacious sight hath so well seen. I will not deny my years, and if I would, the devil, who besets all between fifteen and five-and-twenty in the shape of some giddy infirmity, would soon betray the imposture."

"Of Deurckheim, son?"

"As there is question between the Abbey and the town concerning these hills, we might not stand any better in thy favor, holy Benedictine, were we to say yes."

"In that suspicion, thou dost little justice to the Abbey, son: we may defend the rights of the Church, confided in their temporalities as they are to an unworthy and sinful brotherhood, without feeling any uncharitableness against those who believe

they have claims better than our own. The love of mammon is feeble in bosoms that are devoted to self-denying and repentant lives. Say then boldly that you are a Deurckheim, and dread not my displeasure."

"Since it is thy good pleasure, benevolent monk, I will say boldly that we are of Deurckheim."

"And you come to consult the holy Anchorite of the Cedars?"

"It is not necessary that I should tell one of thy knowledge of human nature, reverend Benedictine, that the failing of all dwellers in small towns, is an itching to look into the affairs of their neighbors. Himmel! If our worthy burgomasters would spare a little time from the affairs of other people to look into their own, we should all be greatly gainers; they in their property, and we in our comfort!"

The Benedictine laughed, and he motioned for the youths to follow, advancing himself towards the hut.

"Since you have given yourselves this trouble, no doubt with a praiseworthy and pious intention, my sons," he said, "let not respect for my presence change your purpose. We will go into the cell of the holy hermit, in company; and if there should be advantage from his blessing, or discourse, believe me I will not be so unjust as to envy either of you a share."

"The manner in which the friars of Limburg deny themselves advantages, in order to do profit to their fellow-christians, is in the mouths of all, far and near; and this generosity of thine, reverend monk, is quite of a piece with the well-earned reputation of the whole brotherhood."

As Gottlob spoke gravely, and bowed with sufficient reverence, the Benedictine was in a slight degree his dupe; though, as he passed beneath the low portal of the hut, he could not prevent a lurking suspicion of the truth.

CHAPTER III.

"He comes at last in sullen loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess."
Lara.

In those ages in which moral wrongs were chiefly repaired by superstition, and the slaves of the grosser passions believed they were only to be rebuked by signal acts of physical self-denial, the world often witnessed examples of men retiring from its allurements, to caves and huts, for the ostensible purposes of penitence and prayer. That this extraordinary pretension to godliness was frequently the cloak of ambition and deceit is certain, but it would be uncharitable to believe that, in common, it did not proceed from an honest, though it might be an ill-directed, zeal. Hermitages are still far from infrequent in the more southern parts of Europe, though they are of raro occurrence in Germany; but previously to the change of religion which occurred in the sixteenth century, and consequently near the period of this tale, they were perhaps more often met with among the descendants of the northern race, than among the more fervid fancies of the southern stock of that quarter of the world. It is a law of nature that the substances which most easily receive impressions, are the least likely to retain them; and possibly there may be requisite a constancy and severity of character to endure the never-ending and mortifying exactions of the anchorite, that were not so easily found among the volatile and happy children of the sun, as among the sterner offspring of the regions of cold and tempests.

Whatever may be said of the principles of him who thus abandoned worldly ease for the love of

God, it it quite sure, that in practice, there were present and soothing rewards in this manner of life, that were not without strong attractions to morbid minds; especially to those in which the seeds of ambition were dormant rather than extinct. It was rare, indeed, that a recluse established himself in the vicinity of a simple and religious neighborhood, and few were they who sought absolute solitude without reaping a rich harvest of veneration and moral dependence among the untrained minds of his admirers. In this treacherous manner does vanity beset us in our strong-holds of mental security, and he who has abandoned the world, in the hope of leaving behind him those impulses which endangered his hopes, finds the enemy in a new shape, intrenched in the very citadel of his defences. There is little merit, and commonly as little safety, in turning the back on any danger, and he has far less claims to the honors of a hero who outlives the contest in consequence of means so questionable, than he who survives because he has given a mortal blow to his antagonist. The task assigned to man is to move among his fellows doing good, filling his part in the scale of creation, and escaping from none of the high duties which God has allotted to his being; and greatly should he be grateful, that, while his service is arduous, he is not left without the powerful aid of that intelligence which controls the harmony of the universe.

The Anchorite of the Cedars, as the recluse now visited by the monk and his accidental companions was usually termed by the peasants, and by the burghers of Deurckheim, had made his appearance about six months before the opening of our story, in the Ringmauer. Whence he had come, how long he intended to remain, and what had been his previous career, were facts equally unknown to those among whom he so suddenly took up his abode.

None had seen him arrive, nor could any say from what sources he drew the few articles of household furniture which were placed in his hut. They who left the camp untenanted one week, on returning the next, had found it occupied by a man, who had arranged one of the deserted buildings in a manner to shelter him from the storms, and who, by erecting a crucifix at his door, had sufficiently announced the motive of his retirement. It was usual to hail the establishment of a hermit in any particular district, as a propitious event; and many were the hopes excited, and plans of effecting temporal objects concocted, by the intervention of the prayers of the stranger, before his presence had been known a fortnight. All within the influence of the name of the hermit, except Emich of Leinengen-Hartenburg, the burgomasters of Deurckheim, and the monks of Limburg, heard of his arrival with satisfaction. The haughty and warlike baron had imbibed a standing prejudice against all devotees, from an inherited enmity to the adjoining convent, which had contested the sovereignty of the valley with his family for ages; while the magistrates had a latent jealousy of every influence which custom and the laws had not rendered familiar. As to the monks, the secret of their distrust was to be found in that principle of human nature, which causes us to dislike being outdone in any merit of which we make an especial profession, even though superior godliness be its object. Until now the Abbot of Limburg was held to be the judge, in the last resort, of all intercessions between earth and heaven; and as his supremacy had the support of time, he had long enjoyed it in that careless security which lures so many of the prosperous to their downfall.

These antipathies on the part of the honored and powerful might, to say the least, have rendered the life of the anchorite very uncomfortable, if not posi-

tively insecure, were it not for the neutralizing effect of the antagonist forces which were set in motion. Opinion, deepened by superstition, held its shield over the humble hut, and month after month glided away, after the arrival of the stranger, during which he received no other testimonials of the feelings excited by his presence, than those connected with the reverence of the bulk of the population. An accidental communication with Berchthold was ripening into intimacy, and, as will be seen in the course of the narrative, there were others to whom his counsel, or his motives, or his prayers, were not indifferent.

The latter fact was made sufficiently apparent to those who on account of their mutual distrust, now presented themselves with less ceremony than usual, at the threshold of the hut. The light within came from a fagot which was burning on the rude hearth, but it was quite strong enough to show the monk and his companions that the anchorite was not alone. Their footsteps had evidently been heard, and a female had time to arise from her knees, and to arrange her mantle in such a manner as effectually to conceal her countenance. The hurried action was scarcely completed, when the Benedictine darkened the door with his gloomy robes, while Berchthold and his friend stood gazing over his shoulders, with lively curiosity mingled with surprise.

The form and countenance of the anchorite were those of middle age. His eye had lost nothing of its quickness or intelligence, though his movements had the deliberation and care that long experience insensibly interweaves in the habits of those who have not lived in vain. He expressed neither concern nor wonder at the unexpected visits, but regarding his guests earnestly, like one who assured himself of their identity, he mildly motioned for all to enter. There was jealous suspicion in the glance

of the Benedictine, as he complied: for until now, he had no reason to believe that the recluse was usurping so intimate and so extensive an influence over the minds of the young, as the presence of the unknown female would give reason to believe.

"I knew that thou wert of holy life and constant prayer, venerable hermit," he said, in a tone that questioned in more than one meaning of the term, "but until this moment, I had not thought thee vested with the Church's power to hearken to the transgressions of the faithful and to forgive sins!"

"The latter is an office, brother, that of right belongs only to God. The head of the Church himself is but an humble instrument of faith, in discharging this solemn trust."

The countenance of the monk did not become more amicable at this reply, nor did he fail to cast a scrutinizing glance at the muffled form of the stranger, in a fruitless endeavor to recognize her person.

"Thou hast not even the tonsure," he continued, while his uneasy eye rolled from that of the recluse to the form of the stranger, who had shrunk, as far as the narrow place would permit, from observation.

"Thou seest, father, I have all the hair that time and infirmities have left me. But is it thought, in thy beneficed and warlike abbey, that the advice of one who has lived long enough to know and to lament his own errors, can injure the less experienced? If unhappily I may have deceived myself, thou art timely present, reverend monk, to repair the wrong."

"Let the maiden come to the confessional of the Abbey Church, if distrust or apprehension weigh upon her mind; doubt it not, she will find great comfort in the experiment."

"As I will testify, from many trials—" abruptly interposed the cow-herd, who advanced intrusively between the two devotees, in a manner to occupy

all their attention. "'Go upon the hill, and ease thy soul, Gottlob,' is my good and venerable mother in the practice of saying, whenever my opinion of myself is getting to be too humble, 'and discourse with some of the godly fathers of the Abbey, whose wisdom and unction will not fail to lighten thy heart of even a heavier load. There is Father Ulrich, he is a paragon of virtue and self-denial; and Father Cuno is even more edifying and salutary than he; while Father Siegfried is more balmy to a soul, than the most reverend Abbot, the virtuous and pious Father Bonifacius himself! Whatever thou doest, child, go upon the hill, and enter boldly into the church, like a loaded and oppressed sinner as thou art, and especially seek counsel and prayer from the excellent and beloved father Siegfried.'"

"And thou—who art thou?" demanded the half-doubting monk, "that thus speakest of me, in terms that I so little merit, to my face?"

"I would I were Lord Emich of Hartenburg, or for that matter, the Elector Palatine himself, in order to do justice to those I honor; in which case certain Fathers of Limburg should have especial favor, and that quickly too, after my own flesh and blood! Who am I, father? I wonder that a face so often seen at the confessional should be forgotten. What there is of me to boast of, Father Siegfried, is of thine own forming—but it is no cause of surprise that thou dost not recall me to mind, since the meek and lowly of spirit are sure to forget their own good works!"

"Thou callest thyself Gottlob—but the name belongs to many Christians."

"More bear it, reverend monk, than know how to do it honor. There is Gottlob Frincke, as arrant a knave as any in Deurckheim; and Gottlob Popp might have more respect for his baptismal vow; and as to Lord Gottlob of Manheim——"

"We will overlook the transgressions of the remainder of thy namesakes, for the good that thou thyself hast done," interrupted the Benedictine, who, having insensibly yielded to the unction of flattery in the commencement of the interview, began now to be ashamed of the weakness, as the fluent cow-herd poured forth his words in a manner to excite some suspicion of the quality of praise that came from such a source. "Come to me when thou wilt, son, and such counsel as a weak head, but a sincere heart, can render, shall not be withheld."

"How this would lighten the heart of my old mother to hear! 'Gottlob,' would she say——"

"What has become of thy companion, and of the maiden?" hastily demanded the Benedictine.

As the part of the cow-herd was successfully performed, he stood aside, with an air of well-acted simplicity and amazement, leaving the discourse to be pursued between the recluse and the monk.

"Thy guests have suddenly left us," continued the latter, after satisfying himself, by actual observation, that no one remained in the hut but himself, its regular occupant, and the honey-tongued Gottlob; "and, as it would seem, in company!"

"They are gone as they came, voluntarily and without question."

"Thou knowest them, by frequent visits, holy hermit?"

"Father, I question none: were the Elector Friedrich to come into my abode, he would be welcome, and this cow-herd is not less so. To both, at parting, I merely say, 'God speed ye!'"

"Thou keepest the cattle of the burghers, Gottlob?"

"I keep a herd, reverend priest, such as my masters please to trust to my care."

"We have grave cause of complaint against one of thy fellows who serves the Count of Hartenburg,

and who is in the daily habit of trespassing on the pastures of the church. Dost know the hind?"

"Potz Tausend! If all the knaves who do these wrongs, when out of sight of their masters, were set in a row before the eyes of the most reverend Abbot of Limburg, he would scarce know whether to begin with prayers or stripes, and they say he is a potent priest at need, with both! I sometimes tremble for my own conduct, though no one can have a better opinion of himself than I, poor and lowly as I stand in your reverend presence; for a hard fortune, and some oversight in the management of my father's affairs, have brought me to the need of living among such associates. Were I not of approved honesty, there might be more beasts on the Abbey lands; and they who now pass their time in fasting in sheer humility, might come to the practice of sheer necessity."

The Benedictine examined the meek countenance of Gottlob with a keen distrustful eye; he next invited the hermit to bestow his blessing, and then motioning for the hind to retire, he entered on the real object of his visit to the hermitage.

We shall merely say, at this point of the narrative, that the moment was extremely critical to all who dwelt in the Palatinate of the Rhine. The Elector had, perhaps imprudently for a prince of his limited resources, taken an active part in the vindictive warfare then raging, and serious reverses threatened to endanger not only his tranquillity but his throne. It was a consequence of the feudal system, which then so generally prevailed in Europe, that internal disorders succeeded any manifest though it might be only a temporary derangement of the power of the potentate that held the right of sovereignty over the infinite number of petty rulers who, at that period, weighed particularly heavy on Germany. To them he was the law, for they were

not apt to acknowledge any supremacy that did not come supported by the strong hand. The ascending scale of rulers, including baron, count, landgrave, margrave, duke, elector, and king, up to the nominal head of the state, the emperor himself, with the complicated and varied interests, embracing allegiance within allegiance, and duty upon duty, was likely in itself to lead to dissension, had the Imperial Crown been one of far more defined and positive influence than it was. But, uncertain and indirect in the application of its means, it was rare that any very serious obstacle to tranquillity was removed, without the employment of positive force. No sooner was the Emperor involved in a serious struggle, than the great princes endeavored to recover that balance which had been lost by the long ascendency of a particular family, while the minor princes seldom saw themselves surrounded with external embarrassment, that internal discord did not come to increase the evil. As a vassal was commonly but a rude reflection of his lord's enmities and prejudices, the reader will have inferred from the language of the cow-herd, that affairs were not on the most amicable footing between those near neighbors, the Abbot of Limburg and the Count of Hartenburg. The circumstance of their existing so near each other was, of itself, almost a certain cause of rivalry; to which natural motive of contention may be added the unremitted strife between the influence of superstition and the dread of the sword.

The visit of the monk had reference to certain interests connected with the actual state of things, as they existed between the Abbey and the Castle. As it would be premature, however, to expose his object, we shall be content with saying, that the conference between the priest and the hermit lasted for half an hour, when the former took his leave,

craving a blessing from one of a life so pure and self-denying as his host.

At the door of the hut, the monk found Gottlob, who had early been gotten rid of, it will be remembered, but who, for reasons of his own, had seen fit to await the termination of the conference.

"Thou here, son!" exclaimed the Benedictine. "I had thought thee at peace, in thy bed, favored with the benediction of a hermit so holy!"

"Good fortune is sure to drive sleep from my eyes, father," returned Gottlob, dropping in by the side of the monk who was walking through the cedars towards the ancient gateway of the camp. "I am not of your animal kind, that is no sooner filled with a good thing than it lies down to rest; but the happier I become, the more I desire to be up to enjoy it."

"Thy wish is natural, and, although many natural desires are to be resisted, I do not see the danger of our knowing our own happiness."

"Of the danger I will say nothing, father, but of the comfort, there is not a youth in Deurckheim, who can speak with greater certainty than myself."

"Gottlob," said the Benedictine, insensibly edging nearer to his companion, like one willing to communicate confidentially, "since thou namest Deurckheim, canst say aught of the humor of its people, in this matter of contention between our holy Abbot and Lord Emich of Hartenburg?"

"Were I to tell thy reverence the truth that lies deepest in my mind, it would be to say, that the burghers wish to see the affair brought to an end, in such a way as to leave no doubt, hereafter, to which party they most owe obedience and love, since they find it a little hard upon their zeal, to have so large demands of these services made by both parties."

"Thou canst not serve God and Mammon, son; so sayeth one who could not deceive."

"And so sayeth reason, too, worshipful monk; but to give thee at once my inmost soul, I believe there is not a man in our Deurckheim, who believes himself strong enough in learning to say, in this strife of duties, which is God and which is Mammon!"

"How! do they call in question our sacred mission—our divine embassy—in short, our being what we are?"

"No man is so bold as to say that the monks of Limburg are what they are; that might be irreverent to the Church, and indecent to Father Siegfried; and the most we dare to say is, that they seem to be what they are; and that is no small matter, considering the way things go in this world. 'Seem to be, Gottlob,' said my poor father, 'and thou wilt escape envy and enemies; for in this seemliness there is nothing so alarming to others; it is only when one is really the thing itself, that men begin to find fault. If thou wishest to live peaceably with thy neighbors, push nothing beyond seeming to be, for that much all will bear, since all can seem; whereas being oftentimes sets a whole village in an uproar. It is wonderful the virtue there is in seeming, and the heart-burnings and scandal, ay, and the downright quarrels there are in being just what one seems.' No, the most we say, in Deurckheim, is that the monks of Limburg seem to be men of God."

"And Lord Emich?"

"As to Count Emich, father, we hold it wise to remember he is a great noble. The Elector has not a bolder knight, nor the emperor a truer vassal; we say, therefore, that he seems to be brave and loyal."

"Thou makest great account, son, of these apparent qualities."

"Knowing the frailty of man, father, and the great likelihood of error, when we wish to judge of acts and reasons, that lie deeper than our knowledge, we hold it to be the most prudent. No, let us of Deurckheim alone, as men of caution!"

"For a cow-herd, thou wantest not wit—Canst read?"

"By God's favor, Providence put that little accident in my way when a child, reverend monk, and I picked it up, as I might swallow a sweet morsel."

"'Tis a gift more likely to injure than to serve one of thy calling. The art can do little benefit to thy herd!"

"I will not take upon myself to say, that any of the cattle are much the better for it; though, to deal fairly by thee, reverend Benedictine, there are animals among them that seem to be."

"How! wilt thou attempt to show a fact not only improbable but impossible? Go to, thou hast fallen upon some silly work of a jester. There have been numberless of these commissions of the devil poured forth, since the discovery of that imprudent brother of Mainz. I would gladly hear in what manner a beast can profit by the art of printing?"

"Thy patience, Father Siegfried, and thou shalt know. Now here is a hind that can read, and there is one that cannot. We will suppose them both the servants of Emich of Hartenburg. Well, they go forth of a morning with their herds; this taking the path to the hills of the Count, and that, having read the description of the boundaries between his Lord's land and that of the holy Abbot of Limburg, taking another, because learning will not willingly follow ignorance; whereupon the reader reaches a nearer and better pasture, than he who hath gone about to feed upon ground that has only been trodden upon too often before, by hoof of beast and foot of man."

"Thy learning hath not done much towards

clearing thy head, Gottlob, whatever it may have done for the condition of thy herd !"

"If your worship has any doubts of my being what I say, here is proof of its justice, then—I know nothing that so crams a man and confuses him as learning! He who has but one horn can take it and go his way; whereas he that hath many, may lose his herd while choosing between instruments that are better or worse. He that hath but one sword, will draw it and slay his enemy: but he that hath much armor, may lose his life while putting on his buckler or head-piece."

"I had not thought thee so skilful in answers. And thou thinkest the good people of Deurckheim will stand neuter between the Abbey and the Count?"

"Father, if thou wilt show me by which side they will be the greatest gainers, I think I might venture to say, with some certainty, on which side they will be likely to draw the sword. Our burghers are prudent townsmen, as I have said, and it is not often that they are found fighting against their own interests."

"Thou shouldst know, son, that he who is most favored in this life, may find the balances of justice weighing against him in the next; while he who suffers in the flesh, will be most likely to find its advantage in the spirit."

"Himmel! In that case, reverend Benedictine, the most holy Abbot of Limburg himself may fare worse hereafter then even a hind who now lives like a dog!" exclaimed Gottlob, with an air of admiration and simplicity that completely misled his listener. "The one is said to comfort the body in various ways, and to know the difference between a cup of pure Rhenish and a draught of the washy liquors that come from the other side of our mountains; while the other, whether it be of necessity or inclination I will not take upon myself to say,

drinks only of the spring. 'Tis a million of pities that one never knoweth which to choose, present ease with future pain, or a starving body with a happy soul! Believe me, Father Siegfried, were thy reverence to think more of these trials that befall us ignorant youths, thou wouldst not deal so heavily with the penances, as thine own severe virtue often tempts thee to do."

"What is thus done is done for thy health, future and present. By chastening the spirit in this manner, it is gradually prepared for its final purification, and thou art not a loser in the eyes of thy fellows, by leading a chaste life. Thou wilt have justice at the settlement of the great account."

"Nay, I am no greedy creditor, to dun Providence for my dues. I very well know that what will come cannot be prevented, and therefore I take patience to be a virtue. But I hope these accounts, of which you tell us so often, are kept with sufficient respect for a poor man; for, to deal fairly with thee, father, we have not overmuch favor in settling those of the world."

"Thou hast credit for all thy good deeds with thy fellows, Gottlob."

"I wish it were true! To me it seems that the world is ready enough to charge, while it is as niggardly as a miser in giving credit—I never did an evil act—and as we are all mortal and frail, most holy monk, these accidents will befall even your saint or a Benedictine—that the deed itself and all its consequences were not set down against me, in letters that a short-sighted man might read; while most of my merits—and considering I am but a cow-herd they are of respectable quality—seem to be forgotten. Now your Abbot, or his Highness the Elector, or even Count Emich——"

"The Summer Landgrave!" interrupted the monk, laughing.

"Summer or winter, as thou wilt, Father Siegfried, he is Count of Hartenburg, and a noble of Leiningen. Even he does no deed of charity, or even of simple justice, that all men do not seize upon the occasion to proclaim it, as eagerly as they endeavor to upbraid me for the accidental loss of a beast, or any other little backsliding, that may befall one, who being bold under thy holy instruction, sometimes stumbles against a sin."

"Thou art a casuist, and, at another time, I must look more closely into the temper of thy mind. At present, thou mayst purchase favor of the Church by enlisting a little more closely in her interests. I remember thy cleverness and thy wit, Gottlob, for both have been remarked in thy visits to the convent; but, until this moment, there has not been sufficient reason to use the latter in the manner that we may fairly claim to do, considering our frequent prayers, and the other consolations afforded in thy behalf."

"Do not be too particular, Father Siegfried, for thy words reveal grievous penance!"

"Which may be much mitigated in future, if not entirely avoided, by a service that I would now propose to thee, honest Gottlob, and which I will venture to say, from my knowledge of thy reverence for holy things, as is manifest in thy attentions to the pious hermit, and thy love for the Abbey of Limburg, thou wouldst not refuse to undertake."

"So!"

"Nay, I have as good as pledged myself to Father Bonifacius to procure either thee, or one shrewd and faithful as thee, to do a trusty service for the brotherhood."

"The latter might not be easy among the cowherds!"

"Of that I am sure. Thy skill in the management of the beasts may yet gain thee the office of

tending the ample herds of the abbey. Thou art already believed fit for the charge."

"Not to deny my own merits, sagacious father, I have already some knowledge of the pastures."

"And of the beasts, too, Gottlob; we keep good note of the characters of all who come to our confessionals. There are worse than thine among them, I do assure thee."

"And yet have I never told thee half that I might say of myself, father!"

"It is not important now. Thou knowest the state of the contest between Count Emich and our Abbey. The service that I ask of thee, son, is this; and by discharging it, with thy wonted readiness, believe me thou wilt gain favor with St. Benedict and his children. We have had reason to know, that there is a strong band of armed men in the castle, ready and anxious to assail our walls, under a vain belief that they contain riches and stores to repay the sacrilege; but we want precise knowledge of their numbers and intentions. Were we to send one of known pursuits on this errand, the Count would find means to mislead him; whereas, we think a hind of thy intelligence might purchase the Church's kindness without suspicion."

"Were Count Emich to get wind of the matter, he would not leave me an ear with which to listen to thy holy admonitions."

"Keep thine own council, and he will not suspect one of thy appearance. Hast no pretext for visiting the castle?"

"Nay, it would be easy to make a thousand. Here, I might say, I wished to ask the cow-herd of Lord Emich for his cunning in curing diseased hoofs, or I might pretend a wish to change my service, or, there is no want of laughing damsels in and about the hold."

"Enough: thou art he, Gottlob, for whom I have sought daily for a fortnight. Go thy way, then, without fail, and seek me, after to-morrow's mass, in the Abbey."

"It may be enough on the side of Heaven, father, but men of our prudence must not forget their mortal state. Am I to risk my ears, do discredit to my simplicity, and neglect my herd, without a motive?"

"Thou wilt serve the Church, son; get favor in the eyes of our reverend Abbot, and thy courage and dexterity will be remembered in future indulgences."

"That I shall serve the Church it is well known to me, reverend Benedictine, and it is a privilege of which a cow-herd hath reason to be proud; but, by serving the Church, I shall make enemies on earth, for two sufficient reasons: first, that the Church is in no great esteem in this valley; and second, because men never love a friend for being any better than themselves. 'No, Gottlob,' used my excellent father to say, 'seem to all around thee conscious of thy unworthiness, after which thou mayst be what thou seemest. On this condition only can virtue live at peace with its fellow-creatures. But if thou wouldst have the respect of mankind,' would he say, 'set a fair price on all thou doest, for the world will not give thee credit for disinterestedness; and if thou workest for naught, it will think thou deservest naught. No,' did he shake his head and add, 'that which cometh easy is little valued, while that which is costly, do men set a price upon.'"

"Thy father was, like thyself, one that looked to his ease. Thou knowest that we inhabitants of cells do not carry silver."

"Nay, righteous Benedictine, if it were a trifle of gold, I am not one to break a bargain for so small a difference."

"Thou shalt have gold, then. On the faith of my holy calling, I will give thee an image of the Emperor in gold, shouldst thou succeed in bringing the tidings we require."

Gottlob stopped short, and kneeling, he reverently asked the monk to bless him. The latter complied, half doubting the discretion of employing such an emissary, between whose cunning and simplicity he was completely at fault. Still, as he risked nothing, except in the nature of the information he was to receive, he saw no sufficient reason for recalling the commission he had just bestowed. He gave the desired benediction, therefore; and our two conspirators descended the mountain in company, discoursing, as they went, of the business on which the cow-herd was about to proceed. When so near the road as to be in danger of observation, they separated, each taking the direction necessary to his object.



CHAPTER IV.

"And not a matron, sitting at her wheel,
But could repeat their story—"

ROGERS.

The female, enveloped in her mantle, had so well profited by the timely interposition of Gottlob Frinck, as to quit the hermit's hut without attracting the notice of the Benedictine. But the vigilance of young Berchthold had not been so easily eluded. He stepped aside as she glided through the door, then stooping merely to catch the eye of the cow-herd, to whom he communicated his intention by a sign, he followed. Had the forester felt any doubts as to the identity of her he pursued, the light and active movement would have convinced him, that age, at

least, had no agency in inducing her to conceal her features. The roe-buck of his own forests scarce bounded with more agility than the fugitive fled, on first quitting the abode of the recluse; nor did her speed sensibly lessen, until she had crossed most of the melancholy camp, and reached a spot where the opening of the blue and star-lit void showed that she was at the verge of the wood, and near the margin of the summit of the mountain. Here she paused, and stood leaning against a cedar, like one whose strength was exhausted.

Berchthold had followed swiftly, but without losing that appearance of calmness and of superior physical force which gives dignity to the steps of young manhood, as compared with the timid but more attractive movements of the feebler sex. He seemed conscious of his greater powers, and unwilling to increase a flight that was already swifter than circumstances required, and which he knew to be far more owing to a vague and instinctive alarm, than to any real cause for apprehension. When the speed of the female ceased, his own relaxed, and he approached the spot where she stood panting for breath, like a cautious boy, who slackens his haste in order not to give new alarm to the bird that has just alighted.

"What is there so fearful in my face, Meta, that thou fleest my presence, as I had been the spirit of one of those Pagans that they say once peopled this camp? It is not thy wont to have this dread of a youth thou hast known from childhood, and I will say, in my own defence, known as honest and true!"

"It is not seemly in a maiden of my years—it was foolish, if not disobedient, to be here at this hour," answered the hurried girl:—"I would I had not listened to the desire of hearing more of the holy hermit's wisdom!"

"Thou art not alone, Meta!"

"That were unbecoming, truly, in my father's child!" returned the young damsel, with an expression of pride of condition, as she glanced an eye towards the fallen wall, among whose stones Berchthold saw the well-known form of a female servitor of his companion's family. "Had I carried imprudence to this pass, Master Berchthold, thou wouldst have reason to believe, in sooth, that it was the daughter of some peasant, that by chance had crossed thy footstep."

"There is little danger of that error," answered Berchthold quickly. "I know thee well; thou art Meta, the only child of Heinrich Frey, the Burgomaster of Deurckheim. None know thy quality and hopes better than I, for none have heard them oftener!"

The damsel dropped her head in a movement of natural regret and sudden repentance, and when her blue eye, softened by a ray of the moon, met the gaze of the forester, he saw that better feelings were uppermost.

"I did not wish to recount my father's honors, nor any accidental advantage of my situation, and, least of all, to thee," answered the maiden, with eagerness; "but I felt concern lest thou shouldst imagine I had forgotten the modesty of my sex and condition—or, I had fear that thou mightest—thy manner is much changed of late, Berchthold!"

"It is then without my knowledge or intention. But we will forget the past, and thou wilt tell me, what wonder hath brought thee, to this suspected and dreaded moor, at an hour so unusual?"

Meta smiled, and the expression of her countenance proved, that if she had moments of uncharitable weakness, they were more the offspring of the world's opinions, than of her own frank and generous nature.

"I might retort the question on thee, Berchthold,

and plead a woman's curiosity as a reason why I should be quickly answered—Why art thou here, at an hour when most young hunters sleep?"

"I am Lord Emich's forester; but thou, as there has just been question, art a daughter of the Burgomaster of Deurckheim."

"I give thee credit for all the difference. Did my mother know that I was thus about to furnish a reason for my conduct, she would say, 'Keep thy explanations, Meta, for those who have a right to demand them!'"

"And Heinrich Frey?"

"He would be little likely to approve of either visit or explanation."

"Thy father loves me not, Meta?"

"He does not so much disapprove of thee, Master Berchthold, as that thou art only Lord Emich's forester. Wert thou as thine own parent was, a substantial burgher of our town, he might esteem thee much. But thou hast great favor with my dear mother!"

"Heaven bless her, that in her own prosperity she hath not forgotten those who have fallen! I think that, in thy heart as in thy looks, Meta, thou more resemblest thy mother than thy father."

"I would have it so. When I speak to thee of my being the child of Heinrich Frey, it is without thought of any present difference between us, I do affirm to thee, Berchthold, but rather as showing that in not forgetting my station, I am not likely to do it discredit. Nay, I know not that a forester's is a dishonorable office! They who serve the Elector in this manner are noble."

"And they who serve nobles, simple. I am but a menial, Meta, though it be in a way to do little mortification to my pride."

"And what is Count Emich but a vassal of the Elector, who, in turn, is a subject of the Emperor!

Thou shalt not dishonor thyself in this manner, Berchthold, and no one say aught to vindicate thee."

"Thanks, dearest Meta. Thou art the child of my mother's oldest and closest friend, and whatever the world may proclaim of the difference that now exists between us, thy excellent heart whispers to the contrary. Thou art not only the fairest, but, in truth, the kindest and gentlest damsel of thy town!"

The daughter, only child, and consequently the heiress of the wealthiest burgher of Deurckheim, did not hear this opinion of Lord Emich's handsome forester without great secret gratification.

"And now thou shalt know the reason of this unusual visit," said Meta, when the silent pleasure excited by the last speech of young Berchthold had a little subsided; "for this have I, in some measure, promised to thee; and it would little justify thy good opinion to forget a pledge. Thou knowest the holy hermit, and the sudden manner of his appearance in the Heidenmauer?"

"None are ignorant of the latter, and thou hast already seen that I visit him in his hut."

"I shall not pretend to give, or to seek, the reason, but sure it is, that he had not been a week in the old Roman abode, when he sought occasion to show me greater notice than to any other maiden of Deurckheim, or than any merit of mine might claim."

"How! is the knave but a pretender to this sanctity, after all!"

"Thou canst not be jealous of a man of his years; and, judging by his worn countenance and hollow eye, years too of mortification and suffering! He truly is of a character to give a youth of thy age, and gentle air, and active frame, and comely appearance, uneasiness! But I see the color in thy cheek, Master Berchthold, and will not offend thee with comparisons that are so much to thy disadvan-

tage. Be the motive of the holy hermit what it will, on the two occasions when he visited our town, and in the visits that we maidens have often made to his cell, he hath shown kind interest in my welfare and future hopes, both as they are connected with this life, and with that to which we all hasten, although it be with steps that are not heard even by our own ears."

"It does not surprise me, that all who see and know thee, Meta, should act thus. And yet I find it very strange!"

"Nay," said the amused girl, "now thou justifiest the exact words of old Ilse, who hath often said to me, 'Take heed, Meta, and put not thy faith too easily in the language of the young townsmen; for, by looking closely into their meaning, thou wilt see that they contradict themselves. Youth is so eager to obtain its end, that it stops not to separate the true from the plausible.' These are her very words, and oft repeated too, which thou hast just verified —I believe the crone fairly sleepeth on that pile of the fallen wall!"

"Disturb her not. One of her years hath great need of rest: nay, it would be thoughtless to rob her of this little pleasure!"

Meta had made a step in advance, seemingly with intent to arouse her attendant, when the hurried words and rapid action of the youth caused her to hesitate. Receding to her former attitude, beneath the shadow of the cedar, she more considerately resumed——

"It would be ungracious, in sooth, to awaken one who hath so lately toiled up this weary hill."

"And she so aged, Meta!"

"And one that did so much for my infancy! I ought to go back to my father's house, but my kind mother will overlook the delay, for she loveth Ilse little less than one of her own blood."

"Thy mother knoweth of this visit to the hermit's hut, then?"

"Dost think, Master Berchthold, that a Burgomaster of Deurckheim's only child would go forth, at this hour, without permission had? There would be great unseemliness in such secret gossiping, and a levity that would better suit thy damsels of Count Emich's village: they say indeed, in our town, that the castle damsels are none too nice in their manner of life."

"They belie us of the mountain strangely, in the towns of the plain! I swear to thee, there is not greater modesty in thy Deurckheim palace, than among our females, whether of the village or of the castle."

"It may be true in the main, and, for the credit of my sex, I hope it is so; but thou wilt scarce find courage, Berchthold, to say aught in favor of her they call Gisela, the warder's child? More vanity have I never seen in female form!"

"They think her fair, in Hartenburg."

"'Tis that opinion which spoileth the creature's manner! Thou art much in her society, Master Berchthold, and I doubt not that use causeth thee to overlook some qualities that are not concealed from strangers. 'Do but regard that flaunting bird from the pass of the Jaegerthal,' said the excellent old Ilse, one morn that we had a festival in our venerable church, to which the country round came forth in their best array; 'one would imagine, from its fluttering, and the movements of its feathers, that it fancied the eye of every young hunter was on its plumage, and that it dreaded the bolt of the archer unexpectedly! And yet have I known animals of this breed, that did not so greatly fear the fowler's hand, if truth were said!'"

"Thou judgest Gisela harshly; for though of some lightness of speech, and haply not without ad-

miration of her own beauty, the girl is far from being uncompanionable, or, at times, of agreeable discourse."

"Nay, I do but repeat the words of Ilse, Master Berchthold!"

"Thy Ilse is old, and garrulous, and is like to utter foolishness."

"This may be so—but let it be foolish, if thou wilt—the folly of my nurse is my folly. I have gained so much from her discourse, that I fear it is now too late to amend. To deal fairly with thee, she did not utter a syllable concerning thy warder's daughter that I do not believe."

Berchthold was but little practised in the ways of the human heart. Free in the expression of his own sentiments as the air he breathed on his native hills, and entirely without thought of guilt, as respects the feeling which bound him to Meta, he had never descended into the arcana of that passion of which he was so completely the subject, without indeed knowing even the extent of his own bondage. He viewed this little ebullition of jealousy, therefore, as a generous nature regards all injustice, and he entered only the more warmly into the defence of the injured party. One of those sieve-like hearts that have been perforated a hundred times by the shots that Cupid fires, right and left, in a capital, would probably have had recourse to the same expedient, merely to observe to what extent he could trifle with the feelings of a being he professed to love.

Europeans, who are little addicted to looking into the eye of their cis-Atlantic kinsman in search of the mote, say, that the master passion of life is but a sluggish emotion in the American bosom. That those who are chiefly employed in the affairs of this world should be content with the natural course of the affections, as they arise in the honest relations

of the domestic circle, is quite as probable, as it is true that they who feed their passions by vanity and variety, are mistaken when they think that casual and fickle sensations compose any of the true ingredients of that purifying and elevated sentiment, which, by investing the admired object with all that is estimable, leads us to endeavor to be worthy of the homage we insensibly pay to virtue. In Berchthold and Meta, the reader is to look for none of that constitutional fervor, which sometimes substitutes impulse for a deeper feeling, or for any of that factitious cultivation of the theory of love, that so often tempts the neophyte to mistake his own hallucinations for the more natural attachment of sympathy and reason. For the former they lived too far north, and for the latter it might possibly be said, that fortune had cast their lot a little too far south. That subtle and nearly indefinable sympathy between the sexes, which we call love, to which all are subject, since its principle is in nature itself, exists perhaps in its purest and least conventional form precisely in the bosoms of those whom Providence has placed in the middle state, between extreme cultivation and ignorance; between the fastidious and sickly perversion of over-indulgence, and the selfishness that is the fruit of constant appeals to exertion; or the very condition of the two young persons that have been placed before the reader in this chapter. Enough has been seen to show that Berchthold, though exercising a menial office, had received opinions superior to his situation; a circumstance that is sufficiently explained by the allusions already made to the decayed fortunes of his parents. His language and manner, therefore, as he generously vindicated Gisela, the daughter of the person charged to watch the approaches of Lord Emich's castle, was perhaps superior to what would have been expected in a mere forester.

"I shall not take upon myself the office of pointing out the faults of our castle beauty, if faults she hath," he said; "but this much may I say in her defence, without fear of exceeding truth; her father is grown gray under the livery of Leiningen, and there is not a child in the world that showeth more reverence or affection to him who gave her being, than this same bird of thine, with its flaunting plumes, and the coquetry with the archer's bolt!"

"'Tis said, a dutiful daughter will ever make an excellent and an obedient wife."

"The luckier then will he be who weds old Friedrich's child. I have known her keep the gates, deep into the night, that her father might take his rest, when the nobles have frequented the forest later than common; ay, and to watch weary hours, when most of her years and sex would find excuses for being on their pillows. Now, this have I often seen, going forth, as thou mayst be certain by my office, in Count Emich's company, in most of his hunts. Nay, Gisela is fair, none will deny; and it may be that, among her other qualities, the girl knows it."

"She appeareth not to be the only one of thy Hartenburg pile that is aware of the fact, Master Berchthold!"

"Dost thou mean, Meta, the revelling abbé, from Paris, or the sworn soldier-monk of Rhodes, that now abide in the castle?" asked the young forester, with a simplicity that would have set the heart of a coquette at ease, by its perfect nature and openness. "Now thou touchest on the matter, I will own, though one of my office should be wary of opinions on those his master loves, but I know thy prudence, Meta—Therefore will I say, that I have half suspected these two ill-assorted servants of the church, of thinking more of the poor girl than is seemly."

"Thy poor Gisela hath cause to hang herself!

Truly, were wassailers, like these thou namest, to regard me with but a free look, the Burgomaster of Deurckheim should know of their boldness!"

"Meta, they would not dare! Poor Gisela is not the offspring of a stout citizen, but the warder of Hartenburg's child, and there may be some difference in thy natures, too—nay, there is; for thou art not one of those that seek the admiration of each cavalier that passeth, but a maiden that knoweth her worth, and the meed that is her due. That thou hast, in something, wronged our beauty of the hold, I needs must say; but to compare thee with her, either in the excellence of the body or that of the mind, is what could never be done justly. If she is fair, thou art fairer; if she is witty, thou art wise!"

"Nay, do not mistake me, Berchthold, by thinking that I have uttered aught against thy warder's daughter that is harsh and unseemly. I know the girl's cleverness, and moreover I am willing to acknowledge, that one cruelly placed by fortune in a condition of servitude, like her's, may find it no easy matter to be always what one of her sex and years could wish. I dare to say, that Gisela, did fortune and opportunity permit, would do no discredit to her breeding and looks, both of which, sooth to say, are somewhat above her condition."

"And thou saidst, thy mother knew of this visit to the hermit?"

"And said truth. My mother has never made objection to any reverence paid by her daughter to the Church or to its servants."

"That hath she not!—Thou art amongst the most frequent of those who resort to the Abbey in quest of holy offices thyself, Meta!"

"Am I not a Christian! Wouldst have a well-respected maiden forget her duties?"

"I say not that; but there is discourse amongst us hunters, that of late the prior hath much preferred

his young nephew, Brother Hugo, to the duty of quieting the consciences of the penitents. It were better that some father, whose tonsure hath a ring of gray, were put into the confessional, in a church so much frequented by the young and fair of Deurckheim."

"Thou wouldst do well to write of this to the Bishop of Worms, or to our holy Abbot, in thine own scholarly hand. Thou hast the clerkly gifts, Master Berchthold, and might persuade!"

"I would that the little I have done in this way had not so failed of its design. Thou hast had frequent proofs of its sincerity, if not of its skill, Meta."

"Well, this is idle, and leads me to forget the hermit: My mother—I know not why—and now thou makest me think of it, I find it different from her common rule; but it is certain that she in nowise discourages these visits to the Heidenmauer. We are very young, Berchthold, and may not yet understand all that enters into older and wiser heads!"

"It is strange that the holy man should seek just us! If he most urges his advice on you among the damsels of the town, he most gives his counsel to me among the youths of the Jaegerthal!"

There was a charm in this idea which held these two young and unpractised minds in sweet thraldom for many fleeting minutes. They conversed of the unexplained sympathy between the man of God and themselves, long and with undiminishing interest in the subject, for it seemed to both that it contained a tie to unite them still closer to each other. Whatever philosophy and experience may pretend on such subjects, it is certain that man is disposed to be superstitious in respect to the secret influences that guide his fortunes, in the dark passage of the world. Whether it be the mystery of the unforeseen future, or the consciousness of how much of even his

most prized success is the result of circumstances that he never could or did control, or whether God, with a view to his own harmonious and sublime ends, has implanted this principle in the human breast, in order to teach us dependence on a superior power, it is certain that few reach a state of mind so calculating and reasoning as not to trust some portion of that which is to come, to the chances of Fortune, or to Providence; for so we term the directing power, as the mind clings to or rejects the immediate agency of the Deity, in the conduct of the subordinate concerns of life. In the age of which we write, intelligence had not made sufficient progress to elevate ordinary minds above the arts of necromancy. Men no longer openly consulted the entrails of brutes, in order to learn the will of fate, but they often submitted to a dictation scarcely less beastly, and few indeed were they who were able to separate piety from superstition, or the grand dispensations of Providence from the insignificant interests of selfishness. It is not surprising, therefore, that Berchthold and Meta should cling to the singular interest that the hermit manifested in them respectively, as an omen propitious to their common hopes; common, for though the maiden had not so far relinquished the reserve she still deemed essential to her sex, as to acknowledge all she felt, that subtle instinct which unites the young and innocent left little doubt in the mind of either, of the actual state of the other's inclinations.

Old Ilse had consequently ample time to rest her frame, after the painful toil of the ascent between the town and the camp. When Meta at length approached to arouse her, the garrulous woman broke out in exclamations of surprise at the shortness of the interview with the hermit, for the soundness of her slumbers left her in utter ignorance of the appearance and disappearance of Berchthold.

"It is but a moment, Meta dear," she said, "since we came up the hill, and I fear thou hast not given sufficient heed to the wise words of the holy man. We should not reject a wholesome draught because it proves bitter to the mouth, child, but swallow all to the last drop, when we think there is healing in the cup. Didst deal fairly by the hermit, and tell him honestly of thy evil nature?"

"Thou forgettest, Ilse, the hermit has not even the tonsure, and cannot shrive and pardon."

"Nay, nay—I know not that! A hermit is a man of God; and a man of God is holy; and any Christian may, ay, and should pardon; and as to shriving, give me a self-denying recluse, who passes his time in prayer, mortifying soul and body, before any monk of Limburg, say I! There is more virtue in one blessing from such a man, than in a dozen from a carousing Abbot—I know not but I might say fifty."

"But I had his blessing, nurse."

"Well, that is comforting, and we have not wearied our limbs for naught; but thou shouldst have told him of thy wish to wear the laced boddice, at the last mass, in order that thy equals might envy thy beauty. It would have been wholesome to have acknowledged that sin, at least."

"But he questioned me not of my sins. All his discourse was of my father's house, and of my good mother, and—and of other matters."

"Thou shouldst then have edged the boddice in among the other matters. Have I not always forewarned thee, Meta, of the danger of pride, and of stirring envy in the bosom of a companion? There is naught more uncomfortable than envy, as I know by experience. Oh! I am no longer young; and come to me if thou wouldst wish to know what envy is, or any other dangerous vice, and I warrant thee thou shalt hear it well explained! Ay, thou

wert very wrong not to have spoken of the boddice!"

"Had it been fit to confess, I might have found more serious sins to own, than any that belong to dress."

"I know not that! Dress is a great beguiler of the young heart, and of the handsome face. If thou hast beauty in thy house, break thy mirrors that the young should not know it, is what I have heard a thousand times; and as thou art both young and fair, I will repeat it, though all Deurckheim gainsay my words, thou art in danger if thou knowest it. No, hadst thou told the hermit of that boddice, it might have done much good. What matters it to such a man, whether he hath the tonsure or not? He hath prayers, and fastings, and midnight thought, and great bodily suffering, and these are surely worth as much hair as hath ever fallen from all the monks in the Palatinate. I would thou hadst told him of that boddice, child!"

"Since thou so wishest it, at our next meeting it shall be said, dear Ilse; so set thy heart at peace."

"This will give thy dear mother great pleasure; else, why should she consent that a daughter of her's should visit a heathenish camp, at so late an hour? I warrant thee that she thought of the boddice!"

"Do cease speaking of the garment, nurse; my thoughts are bent on something else."

"Well, if indeed thou thinkest of something else, it may be amiss to say more at present, though, Heaven it knows! thou hast great occasion to recall that vain-glorious mass to thy mind. How suddenly thy communion with the hermit ended to-night, Meta!"

"We have not been long on the mountain, truly, Ilse. But we must hasten back, lest my mother should be uneasy."

"And why should she be so? Am I not with thee? Is age nothing, and experience, and prudence, and an old head, ay, and, for that matter, an old body too, and a good memory, and such eyes as no other in Deurckheim of my years hath—I say of my years, for thou hast better; and thy dear mother's are little worse than thine—but of my years, few have their equal. At thy age, girl, I was not the old Ilse, but the lively Ilse, and the active, and, God forgive me if there be vain-glory in the words! but truth should always be spoken—the handsome Ilse, and this too without aid from any such boddice as that of thine."

"Wilt never forget the boddice! here, lean on me, nurse, or thy foot may fail thee in the steep descent."

Here they began to descend, and as they were now at a point of the path where much caution was necessary, the conversation in a great measure ceased.

He who visits Deurckheim now, will find sufficient remaining evidence to show that the town formerly extended more towards the base of the mountain than its present site would prove. There are the ruins of walls and towers among the vineyards that ornament the foot of the hill, and tradition speaks of fortifications that have long since disappeared, rendered useless by those improvements in warfare that have robbed so many other strong places of their importance. Then, every group of houses on an eminence was more or less a place of defence; but the use of gunpowder and artillery centuries ago rendered all these targets useless, and he who would now seek a citadel, is most sure to find it buried in some plain or morass. The world has reached another crisis in improvement, for the introduction of steam is likely to alter all its systems of offence and defence both by land

and sea; but be the future as it may, the skill of the engineer had not so far ripened at the period of our tale, as to prevent Meta and her attendant from entering within walls of ancient construction, clumsily adapted to meet the exigencies of the imperfect state of the existing art. As the hour was early, they had no difficulty in reaching the Burgomaster's door without attracting remark.



CHAPTER V.

"What news?"
"None, my lord; but that the world is grown honest."
"Then is doomsday near!"
Hamlet.

WITHIN the whole of these widely extended states, there is scarcely a single vestige of the manner of life led by those who first settled in the wilderness. Little else is found to arrest the eye of the antiquary in the shape of a ruin, except the walls of some fortress or the mounds of an intrenchment of the war of independence. We have, it is true, some faint remains of times still more remote; and there are even a few circumvallations, or other inventions of defence, that are believed to have once been occupied by the red man; but in no part of the country did there ever exist an edifice, of either a public or a private nature, that bore any material resemblance to a feudal castle. In order, therefore, that the reader shall have as clear a picture as our feeble powers can draw, of the hold occupied by the sturdy baron who is destined to act a conspicuous part in the remainder of this legend, it has become necessary to enter at some length into a description of the surrounding localities, and of

the building itself. We say of the reader, for we profess to write only for the amusement—fortunate shall we be if instruction may be added—of our own countrymen: should others be pleased to read these crude pages, we shall be flattered and of course grateful; but with this distinct avowal of our object in holding the pen, we trust they will read with the necessary amount of indulgence.

And here we shall take occasion to hold one moment's communion with that portion of the reading public of all nations, that, as respects a writer, composes what is termed the world. Let it not be said of us, because we make frequent reference to opinions and circumstances as they exist in our native land, that we are profoundly ignorant of the existence of all others. We make these references, crime though it be in hostile eyes, because they best answer our end in writing at all, because they allude to a state of society most familiar to our own minds, and because we believe that great use has hitherto been made of the same things, to foster ignorance and prejudice. Should we unheedingly betray the foible of national vanity—that foul and peculiar blot of American character! we solicit forgiveness; urging, in our own justification, the aptitude of a young country for falling insensibly into the vein of imitation, and praying the critical observer to overlook any blunders in this way, if perchance we should not manifest that felicity of execution which is the fruit only of great practice. Hitherto we believe that our modesty cannot justly be impeached. As yet we have left the cardinal virtues to mankind in the gross, never, to our knowledge, having written of "American courage;" or "American honesty," nor yet of "American beauty," nor haply of "American manliness," nor even of "American strength of arm," as qualities abstracted and not common to our fellow-creatures;

but have been content, in the unsophisticated language of this western clime, to call virtue, virtue—and vice, vice. In this we well know how much we have fallen short of numberless but nameless classical writers of our own time, though we do not think we are greatly losers by the forbearance, because we have sufficient proof that when we wish to make our pages unpleasant to the foreigner, we can effect that object by much less imposing allusions to national merits; since we have good reason to believe, there exists a certain querulous class of readers who consider even the most delicate and reserved commendations of this western world, as so much praise unreasonably and dishonestly abstracted from themselves. As for that knot in our own fair country, who aim at success by flattering the stranger, and who hope to shine in their own little orbits by means of borrowed light, we commit them to the correction of a reproof which is certain to come, and, in their cases, to come embittered by the consciousness of its being merited by a servility as degrading as it is unnatural. As they dive deeper into the secrets of the human heart, they will learn there is a healthful feeling that cannot be repulsed with impunity, and that as none are so respected as they who fearlessly and frankly maintain their rights, so none are so contemned as those who ignobly desert them.

During the time that Berchthold was holding converse with Meta, on the mountain of the Heidenmauer, Emich of Leiningen was at rest in his castle of Hartenburg. It has already been said, that the hold was of massive masonry, the principal material being the reddish sand-stone, that is so abundantly found in nearly the whole region of the ancient Palatinate. The building had grown with time, and that which had originally been a tower had swelled into a formidable and extensive fortress. In the

ages which succeeded the empire of Charlemagne, he who could rear one of these strong places, and maintain it in opposition to his neighbors, became noble, and in some measure a sovereign. He established his will as law for the contiguous territory, and they who could not enjoy their own lands, without submitting to his pleasure, were content to purchase protection by admitting their vassalage. No sooner was one of these local lords firmly established in his hold, by receiving service and homage from the husbandmen, than he began to quarrel with his nearest neighbor of his own condition. The victor necessarily grew more powerful by his conquests, until, from being the master of one castle and one village, he became in process of time the master of many. In this manner did minor barons swell into power and sovereignty, even mighty potentates tracing their genealogical and political trees into roots of this wild growth. There still stands on an abrupt and narrow ledge of land, in the confederation of Switzerland and in the Canton of Argovie, a tottering ruin, that, in past ages, was occupied by a knight, who from his aerie overlooked the adjoining village, and commanded the services of its handful of boors. This ruined castle was called Hapsbourg, and is celebrated as the cradle of that powerful family which has long sat upon the throne of the Cæsars, and which now rules so much of Germany and Upper Italy. The King of Prussia traces his line to the House of Hohenzollern, the offspring of another castle; and numberless are the instances in which he who thus laid the corner-stone of a strong place, in ages when security was only to be had by good walls, also laid the foundation of a long line of prosperous and puissant princes.

Neither the position of the castle of Hartenburg, however, nor the period in which it was founded,

was likely to lead to results great as these just named. As has been said, it commanded a pass important for local purposes, but not of so much moment as to give him who held the hold any material rights beyond its immediate influence. Still, as the family of Leiningen was numerous, and had other branches and other possessions in more favored portions of Germany, Count Emich was far from being a mere mountain chief. The feudal system had become methodized long before his birth, and the laws of the Empire secured to him many villages and towns on the plain, as the successor of those who had obtained them in more remote ages. He had recently claimed even a higher dignity, and wider territories, as the heir of a deceased kinsman; but in this attempt to increase his power, and to elevate his rank, he had been thwarted by a decision of his peers. It was to this abortive assumption of dignity, that he owed the soubriquet of the Summer Landgrave; for such was the rank he had claimed, and the period for which he had been permitted to bear it.

With this knowledge of the power of their family, the reader will not be surprised to hear that the castle of the Counts of Hartenburg, or, to be more accurate, of the Counts of Hartenburg-Leiningen, was on a commensurate scale. Perched on the advanced spur of the mountain, just where the valley was most confined, and at a point where the little river made a short bend, the pass beneath lay quite at the mercy of the archer on its battlements. In the fore-ground, all that part of the edifice which came into the view was military, and, in some slight degree, fitted to the imperfect use that was then made of artillery; while in the rear arose that maze of courts, chapels, towers, gates, portcullises, state-rooms, offices, and family apartments, that marked the usages and tastes of the day. The hamlet which lay in the dell, immediately beneath the walls of the

salient towers, or bastions, for they partook of both characters, was insignificant, and of little account in estimating the wealth and resources of the feudal lord. These came principally from Deurckheim, and the fertile plains beyond, though the forest was not without its value, in a country in which the ax had so long been used.

We have said that Emich of Leiningen was taking his rest in the hold of Hartenburg. Let the reader imagine a massive building, in the centre of the confused pile we have mentioned, rudely fashioned to meet the wants of the domestic economy of that age, and he will get a nearer view of the interior. The walls were wainscoted, and had much uncouth and massive carving; the halls were large and gloomy, loaded with armor, and at this moment pregnant with armed men; the saloons of the medium size which suited a baronial state, and all the appliances of that mingled taste in which comfort and luxury, as now understood, were unknown, but which was not without a portion of the effect that is produced by an exhibition of heavy magnificence. With few but signal exceptions, Germany, even at this hour, is not a country remarkable for the elegancies of domestic life. Its very palaces are of simple decoration, its luxuries of a homebred and inartificial kind, and its taste is rarely superior, and indeed not always equal, to our own. There is still a shade of the Gothic in the habits and opinions of this constant people, who seem to cultivate the subtle refinements of the mind, in preference to the more obvious and material enjoyments which address themselves to the senses.

Quaint and complicated ornaments, wrought by the patient industry of a race proverbial for this description of ingenuity; swords, daggers, morions, cuirasses, and all sorts of defensive armor then in use; such needle-work, as it befitted a noble dame

to produce; pictures that possessed most of the faults and few of the beauties of the Flemish school; furniture that bore some such relation to the garniture of the palaces of electors and kings, as the decorations of a village drawing-room in our own time, bear to those of the large towns; a profuse display of plate, on which the arms of Leiningen were embossed and graven in every variety of style; with genealogical trees and heraldic blazonry in colors, were the principal features.

Throughout the whole pile, there was little appearance, however, of the presence of females, or even of the means of their accommodation. Few of that sex were seen in the corridors, or offices, or courts; though men crowded the place in unusual numbers. The latter were chiefly grim and whiskered warriors, who loitered in the halls, or in the more public parts of the castle, like idlers waiting for the expected movement of exertion. None among them were armed at all points, though this carelessly wore his morion, that had buckled on a breast-plate, and another leaned listlessly on his arquebuse or handled his pike. Here a group exercised, in levity, with their several weapons of offence; there a jester amused a crowd of sluggish listeners, with his ribaldry and humor; and numberless were those who quaffed of the Rhenish of their lord. Although this continent had then been discovered, the goodly portion which has since fallen to our heritage was still in the hands of its native proprietors; and the plant, so long known as the weed of Virginia, but which has since become a staple of so many other countries in this hemisphere, was not in its present general use amongst the Germans; else would it have been our duty to finish this hasty sketch, by enveloping it all in mist. Notwithstanding the general air of indifference and negligence, which reigned within the walls of Hartenburg, with-

out the gates, in the turrets, and on the advanced towers, there was the appearance of more than the customary watchfulness. Had one been there to note the circumstance, he would have seen, in addition to the sentries who always guarded the approaches of the castle, several swift-footed spies on the look-out, in the hamlet, on the rocks of the mountain-side, and along the winding paths; and as all eyes were turned towards the valley in the direction of Limburg, it was evident that the event they awaited was expected to arrive from that quarter.

While such was the condition of his hold and of so strong a body of his vassals, Count Emich himself had retired from observation, to one of the quaint, half-rude, half-magnificent saloons of the place. The room was lighted by twenty tapers, and other well-known signs indicated the near approach of guests. He paced the large apartment with a heavy and armed heel; while care, or at least severe thought, contracted the muscles around a hard and iron brow, which bore evident marks of familiar acquaintance with the casque. Perhaps this is the only country of Christendom, even now, in which the profession of the law is a pursuit still more honorable and esteemed than that of arms—the best proof of a high and enviable civilization—but at the age of our narrative, the gentleman that was not of the Church, the calling which nearly monopolized all the learning of the times, was of necessity a soldier. Emich of Leiningen carried arms therefore as much in course, as the educated man of this century reads his Horace or Virgil; and as nature had given him a vigorous frame, a hardy constitution, and a mind whose indifference to personal suffering amounted at times to ruthlessness, he was more successful in his trade of violence, than many a

pale and zealous student proves in the cultivation of letters.

The musing Count scarce raised his looks from the oaken floor he trod, as menial after menial appeared, moving with light step in the presence of one so dreaded and yet so singularly loved. At length a female, busy in some of the little offices of her sex, glided before his half-unconscious sight. The youth, the bloom, the playful air, the neat coif, the tight boddice, and the ample folds of the falling garments, at length seemed to fill his eye with the form of his companion.

"Is it thou, Gisela?" he said, speaking mildly, as one addresses a favored dependant. "How fareth it with the honest Karl?

"I thank my lord the Count, his aged and wounded servant hath less of pain than is commonly his lot. The limb he has lost in the service of the House of Leiningen——"

"No matter for the leg, girl—thou art too apt to dwell upon that mischance of thy parent."

"Were my lord the Count to leave a limb on the field, it might be missed when he was hurried!"

"Thinkest thou, child, that my tongue would never address the Emperor without naming the defect? Go to, Gisela; thou art a calculating hussy, and rarely permittest occasion to pass without allusion to this growing treasure of thy family. Are my people actively on the watch, with or without their limbs?"

"They are as their natures and humors tend. Blessed Saint Ursula knows where the officers of the country have picked up so ungainly a band, as these that now inhabit Hartenburg! One drinketh, from the time his eyes open in the morn until they shut at even; another sweareth worse than the northern warriors that do these ravages in the Palatinate; this a foul dealer in ribaldry; that a glutton

who never moveth lip but to swallow; and none, nay, not a swaggerer of them all, hath civil word for a maiden, though she be known as one esteemed in their master's household."

"They are my vassals, girl, and stouter men at need are not mustered in Germany."

"Stout in speech, and insolent of look, my Lord Count, but most odious company to all, of modest demeanor and of good intentions, in the hold."

"Thou hast been humored by thy mistress, girl, until thou sometimes forgettest discretion. Go and look my guests are informed that the hour of the banquet is at hand;—I await the pleasure of their presence."

Gisela, whose natural pertness had been somewhat heightened by an indulgent mistress, and in whom consciousness of more beauty than ordinarily falls to the share of females of her condition had produced freedom of language that sometimes amounted to temerity, betrayed her discontent in a manner very common to her sex, when it is undisciplined, or little restrained by a wholesome education. She pouted, taking care however that Emich's eye was again turned to the floor, tossed her head, and quitted the room. Left to himself, the Count relapsed into his reverie. In this manner did several minutes pass unheeded.

"Dreaming, as usual, noble Emich, of escalades and excommunication!" cried a gay voice at his elbow, the speaker having entered the saloon unseen —"of revengeful priests, of vassalage, of shaven abbots, the confessional and penance dire, thy rights redressed, the frowning conclave, the Abbey cellar, thy morion, revenge, and, to sum up all, in a word that covers every deadly sin, that fallen angel the Devil!"

Emich forced a grim smile at this unceremonious and comprehensive salutation, accepting the offered,

hand of him who uttered it, however, with the frank freedom of a boon companion.

"Thou art right welcome, Albrecht," he replied, "for the moment is near when my ghostly guests should arrive; and to deal fairly by thee, I never feel myself quite equal to a single combat of wits with the pious knaves; but thy support will be enough, though the whole Abbey community were of the party."

"Ay, we are akin, we sons of Saint John and these bastards of Saint Benedict. Though more martial than your monks of the hill, we of the island are sworn to quite as many virtues. Let me see," he added, counting on his fingers with an air of bold licentiousness; "firstly are we vowed to celibacy, and your Benedictine is no less so—then are we self-dedicated to chastity, as is your Limburg monk; next we respect our oaths, as does your Father Bonifacius; then both are servants of the holy cross;" by a singular influence the speaker and the Count made the sacred symbol on their bosoms, as the former uttered the word, "and, doubt it not, I shall be the equal of the reverend brotherhood. They say sin can match sin, and saint should surely be saint's equal! But, Emich, thou art graver than becometh a hot carousal, like this we meditate!"

"And thou gay as if about to gallant the dames of Rhodes to one of thy island festivals!"

The Knight of Saint John regarded his attire with complacency, strutting by the side of his host, as the latter resumed his walk, with the air of a bird of admired plumage. Nor was the remark of the Count of Hartenburg misapplied, since his kinsman and guest had, in reality, expended more labor on his toilette than was customary in the absence of females, and in that rude hold. Unlike the stern and masculine Emich, who rarely divested himself of all his warlike gear, the sworn defender of the Cross

appeared entirely in a peaceful guise, if the long rapier that dangled at his side, and which to a much later period formed an indispensable accompaniment of one of gentle condition, could be excepted from the implements of war. His doublet, fully decorated with embroidery, fringes, and loops, and dotted with buttons, was of a pale orange stuff, that was puffed and distended about his person, in the liberal amplitude of the prevailing fashion. The nether garment, which scarce appeared, however, essential as it might be, was of the same material, and cut with a similar expenditure of cloth. The hose were pink, and, rolling far above the knee, gave the effect of a rich coloring to the whole picture. He wore shoes whose upper-leather rose high against the small of the leg, buckles that covered the instep, and about the throat and wrists there was a lavish display of lace. The well-known Maltese cross dangled by a red ribbon, at a button-hole of the doublet; not above the heart, as is the custom at present among the chevaliers of the other hemisphere, but, by a vagary of taste, so low as to demonstrate, if indeed there is any allusion intended by the accidental position of these jewels, that the honorable badge was assumed in direct reference to that material portion of the human frame which is believed to be the repository of good cheer; an interpretation that, in the case of Albrecht of Viederbach, the knight in question, was perhaps much nearer to the truth than he would have been willing to own. After poising himself, first on the point of one shoe, and then on the other, smoothing his ruffles, shoving the rapier more aside, and otherwise adjusting his attire to his mind, the professed soldier of Saint John of Jerusalem pursued the discourse.

"I am decent, kinsman," he replied; "fit to be a guest at thy hospitable board, if thou wilt, in the absence of its fair mistress, but beyond that un-

worthy to be named. As for the dames of our unhappy and violated Rhodes, dear cousin, thou knowest little of their humors, if thou fanciest that this rude guise would have any charm in their refined eyes. Our knights were used to bring into the island the taste and improvements of every distant land; and small though it be, there are few portions of the earth, in which the human arts, for so I call the decoration of the human body, flourished more than in our circumscribed, valiant, and much regretted Rhodes. Thus was it, at least, until the fell Ottoman triumphed!"

"'Fore God, I had thought thee sworn to all sorts of modesty, in speech, life, and other abstinences!"

"And art thou not sworn, most mutinous Emich, to obey thy liege lords, the Emperor and the Elector—nay, for certain of thy lands and privileges, art thou not bound to knight's service and obedience to the holy Abbot of Limburg?"

"God's curse on him and on all the others of that grasping brotherhood!"

"Ay, that is but the natural consequence of thy oath, as this doublet is of mine. If the rigid performance of a vow is as agreeable to the body, as we are taught it may be healthful to the soul, Count of Leiningen, where would be the merit of observance? I never don these graceful garments, but a wholesome remembrance of watchful nights passed on the ramparts, of painful sieges and watery trenches, or of sickly cruises against the Mussulmans, do not present themselves in the shape of past penances. In this manner do we sweeten sin, by our bodily pains, and by the memory of hours of virtuous hardships!"

"By the three sainted Kings of Koeln, and the eleven thousand virgins of that honored city, Master Albrecht! but thou wert much favored in thy nar-

row island, if it were permitted to thee to sin in this fashion, with the certainty of tempering punishment with so light service! These griping monks of Limburg make much of their favors, and he who would go with a safe skin, must needs look to an indulgence had and well paid for, in advance. I know not the number of goodly casks of the purest Rhenish that little sallies of humor may have cost me, first and last, in this manner of princely expenditure; but certain am I, that did occasion offer, the united tributes would leave little empty space in Prince Friedrich's vaunted tun, in his ample cellars of Heidelberg!"

"I have often heard of that royal receptacle of generous liquor, and have meditated a pilgrimage in honor of its capacity. Does the Elector receive noble travellers with a hospitality suited to his rank and means?"

"That doth he, and right willingly, though this war presses sorely, and giveth him other employment. Thy wayfaring will not be weary, for thou mayst see the towers of Heidelberg from off these hills, and a worthy steed might be pricked from this court of mine into that of Duke Friedrich in a couple of hours of hard riding."

"When the merits of thy cellar are exhausted, noble Emich, it will be in season to put the Tun to the proof," replied the Knight of Rhode. "as our esteemed friend here, the Abbot, will maintain, in the face of all the reformers with which our Germany is infested."

In introducing another character, we claim the reader's patience for a moment of digression. Whatever may be said of the merits and legality of the Reformation, effected chiefly by the courage of Luther (and we are neither sectarian nor unbeliever, to deny the sacred origin of the church from which he dissented,) it is very generally admitted, that the

long and undisputed sway of the prevailing authority of that age, had led to abuses, which called loudly for some change in its administration. Thousands of those who had devoted their lives to the administrations of the altar, were quite as worthy of the sacred office as it falls to man's lot to become; but thousands had assumed the tonsure, the cowl, or the other symbols of ecclesiastical duty, merely to enjoy the immunities and facilities the character conferred. A long and nearly undisputed monopoly of letters, the influence obtained by the unnatural union between secular and religious power, and the dependent condition of the public mind, the legitimate consequence of both, induced all who aspired to moral pre-eminence, to take this, the most certain, because the most beaten, ot the paths that led to this species of ascendency. It is not alone to the religion of Christendom, as it existed in the time of Luther, that we are to look for an example of the baneful consequence of spiritual and temporal authority, as blended in human institutions Christian or Mahommedan, Catholic or Protestant, the evil comes in every case from the besetting infirmity which tempts the strong to oppress the weak, and the powerful to abuse their trusts. Against this failing there seems to be no security but an active and certain responsibility. So long as the severe morality required of its ministers, by the Christian faith, is uncorrupted by any gross admixture of worldly advantage, there is reason to believe that the altar, at least, will escape serious defilement; but no sooner are these fatal enemies admitted to the sanctuary, than a thousand spirits, prompted by cupidity, rush rashly into the temple, willing to bear with the outward exactions of the faith, in order to seek its present and visible rewards.

However pure may be a social system, or a religion, in the commencement of its power, the possession of an undisputed ascendency lures all alike into excesses fatal to consistency, to justice, and to truth. This is a consequence of the independent exercise of human volition, that seems nearly inseparable from human frailty. We gradually come to substitute inclination and interest for right, until the moral foundations of the mind are sapped by indulgence, and what was once regarded with the aversion that wrong excites in the innocent, gets to be not only familiar, but justifiable by expediency and use. There is no more certain symptom of the decay of the principles requisite to maintain even our imperfect standard of virtue, than when the plea of necessity is urged in vindication of any departure from its mandate, since it is calling in the aid of ingenuity to assist the passions, a coalition that rarely fails to lay prostrate the feeble defences of a tottering morality.

It is no wonder, then, that the world, at a period when religious abuses drove even churchmen reluctantly to seek relief in insubordination, should exhibit bold instances of the flagrant excesses we have named. Military ambition, venality, love of ease, and even love of dissipation, equally sought the mantle of religion as cloaks to their several objects; and if the reckless cavalier was willing to flesh his sword on the body of the infidel, in order that he might live in men's estimation as a hero of the cross, so did the trifler, the debauchee, and even the wit of the capital, consent to obtain circulation by receiving an impression which gave currency to all coin, whether of purer or of baser metal, since it bore the outward stamp of the Church of God.

"Reformers, or rather revilers, for that is the term they most merit," returned the Abbé, alluded to in the last speech of Albrecht of Veiderbach, "I

consign without remorse to the devil. As for this pledge of our brave Knight of Saint John, noble Count Emich, so far as I am concerned, it shall be redeemed: for I am certain the cellars of Heidelberg can resist a heavier inroad than any that is likely to invade them by such means. But I am late from my chamber, and I had hoped, ere this, to have seen our brethren of Limburg! I hope no unnecessary misunderstanding is likely to deprive us of the satisfaction of their presence, Lord Count?"

"Little fear of that, so far as it may depend on any disappointment in a feast. If ever the devil tempted these monks of the hill, it has been in the shape of gluttony. Were I to judge by the experience of forty years passed in their neighborhood, I should think they deem abstinence an eighth deadly sin."

"Your Benedictine is privileged to consider hospitality a virtue, and the Abbot has fair license for the indulgence of some little cheer. We will not judge them harshly, therefore, but form our opinions of their merits by their deeds. Thou hast many servitors without, to do them honor to-night, Lord Emich."

The Count of Leiningen frowned, and, ere he answered, his eye exchanged a glance with that of his kinsman, which the Abbé might have interpreted into a hidden meaning, had it attracted his observation.

"My people gather loyally about their lord, for they have heard of this succor sent by the Elector to uphold the lazy Benedictines," was the reply. "Four hundred mercenaries lie within the Abbey walls this night, Master Latouche, and it should not cause surprise that the vassals of Emich of Hartenburg are ready with hand and sword to do service in his defence. God's mercy! The cunning priests may pretend alarm, but if any here hath cause to be

afraid, truly it is the rightful and wronged lord of the Jaegerthal!"

"Thy situation, Cousin of Hartenburg," observed the wearer of the cross of Saint John, "is, in sooth, one of masterly diplomacy. Here dost thou stand at sword's point with the Abbot of Limburg, ready at need to exchange deadly thrusts, and to put this long-disputed supremacy on the issue of battle, while thou callest on the keeper of thy cellar to bring forth the choicest of its contents, in order to do hospitality and honor to thy mortal foe! This beateth, in all niceties, Monsieur Latouche, the situation of an abbé of thy quality, who is scarce churchman enough to merit salvation, nor yet deep enough in sin to be incontinently damned in the general mass of evil-doers."

"It is to be hoped that we shall share the common lot of mortals, which is to receive more grace than they merit," returned the Abbé, a title that in fact scarce denoted one seriously devoted to the Church. "But I trust this present meeting between the hostile powers may prove amicable; for, not to conceal the truth, unlike our friend the Knight here, I am of none of the belligerent orders."

"Hark!" exclaimed the host, lifting a finger to command attention: "Heard ye aught?"

"There is much of the music of thy growlers in the courts, cousin, and some oaths in a German that needs be translated to be understood; but that blessed signal the supper-bell is still mute."

"Go to!—'Tis the Abbot of Limburg and his brethren, Fathers Siegfried and Cuno. Let us to the portal, to do them usual honor."

As this was welcome news to both the Knight and the Abbé, they manifested a suitable desire to be foremost in paying the required attention to a personage, as important in that region as the rich and powerful chief of the neighboring religious establishment.

CHAPTER VI.

"Why not?—The deeper sinner, better saint."
BYRON.

A WILD and plaintive note had been sounded on a horn far in the valley towards the hill of Limburg. This melodious music was of common occurrence, for of all that dwell in Europe, they who inhabit the banks of the Rhine, the Elbe, the Oder, and the Danube, with their tributaries, are the most addicted to the cultivation of sweet sounds. We hear much of the harshness of the Teutonic dialects, and of the softness of those of Latin origin; but, Venice and the regions of the Alps excepted, nature has amply requited for the inequality that exists between the languages, by the difference in the organs of speech. He who journeys in those distant lands must, as a rule, expect to hear German warbled and Italian in a grand crash, though exceptions are certainly to be found in both cases. But music is far more common on the vast plains of Saxony than on the Campagna Felice, and it is no uncommon occurrence to be treated by a fair-haired postilion of the former country, as he slowly mounts a hill, with airs on the horn that would meet with favor in the orchestra of a capital. It was one of these melancholy and peculiar strains which now gave the signal to the spies of Count Emich, that his clerical guests had quitted the convent.

"Heard ye aught, brothers?" demanded Father Bonifacius of the companions who rode at his side, nearly at the same moment that the Lord of Leiningen put the same question in his hold; "that horn spoke in a meaning strain!"

"We may be defeated in our wish to reach the castle suddenly," returned the monk, already known

to the reader as Father Siegfried; "but though we fail in looking into Count Emich's secret with our own eyes, I have engaged one to do that office for us, and in a manner, I trust, that shall put us on the scent of his designs. Courage, most holy Abbot, the cause of God is not likely to fail for want of succor. When were the meek and righteous ever deserted?"

The Abbot of Limburg ejaculated, in a manner to express little faith in any miraculous interposition in behalf of his cure, and he drew about him the mantle that served in some degree to conceal his person, spurring the beast he rode only the quicker, from a feverish desire, if possible, to outstrip the sounds, which he intuitively felt were intended to announce his approach. The prelate was not deceived, for no sooner did the wild notes reach the castle, than the signal, which had caught the attention of its owner, was communicated to those within the walls.

At the expected summons there was a general movement among the idlers of the courts. Subordinate officers passed among the men, hurrying those away to their secret lodging places who were intractable from excess of liquor, and commanding the more obedient to follow. In a very few minutes, and long before the monks, who however pricked their beasts to the utmost, had time to get near the hamlet even, all in the hold was reduced to a state of tranquil repose; the castle resembling the abode of any other powerful baron, in moments of profound security. Emich had seen to this disposition of his people in person, taking strict caution that no straggler should appear, to betray the preparations that existed within his walls. When this wise precaution was observed, he proceeded, with his two companions, to take a station near the door of the building more especially appropriated to the accom-

modation of himself and his friends, in order to await the arrival of the monks.

The moon had ascended high enough to illuminate the mountain-side, and to convert the brown towers and ramparts of Hartenburg into picturesque forms, relieved by gloomy shadows. The signals appeared to have thrown all who dwelt in the hamlet, as well as they who inhabited the frowning hold which overhung that secluded spot, into mute attention. For a few minutes the quiet was so deep and general, that the murmuring of the rivulet which meandered through the meadows was audible. Then came the swift clattering of hoofs.

"Our churchmen are in haste to taste thy Rhenish, noble Emich," said Albrecht of Viderbach, who rarely thought; "or is it a party of their sumpter mules that I hear in the valley?"

"Were the Abbot about to journey to some other convent of his order, or were he ready to visit his spiritual master of Spires, there is no doubt that many such cattle would be in his train; for of all lovers of fat cheer, Wilhelm of Venloo, who has been styled Bonifacius in his baptism of office, is he that most worships the fruits of the earth. I would he and all his brotherhood were spiritually planted in the garden of Eden! They should be well watered with my tears!"

"The wish hath a saintly odor, but may not be accomplished without mortal aid—unless thou hast favor with the Prince Elector of Koeln, who might haply do thee that service, in the way of miracle."

"Thou triflest, knight, in a matter of great gravity," answered Emich roughly, for, notwithstanding his inherited and deadly dislike of the particular portion of the church which interfered with his own power, the Count of Hartenburg had all the dependence on superior knowledge that is the unavoidable offspring of a limited education. "The Prince Elec-

tor hath served many noble families in the way thou namest, and he might do honor to houses less deserving of his grace, than that of Leiningen. But here cometh the Abbot and his boon associates. God's curse await them for their pride and avarice!"

The clattering of hoofs had been gradually increasing, and was now heard even on the pavement of the outer court; for in order to do honor to his guests, the count had especially ordered there should be no delay or impediment from gate, portcullis, or bridge.

"Welcome, and reverence for thy churchly office, right holy Abbot!" cried Emich, from whose lips had just parted the malediction, advancing officiously to aid the prelate in dismounting—"Thou art welcome, brothers both; worthy companions of thy respected and honored chief."

The churchmen alighted, assisted by the menials of Hartenburg, with much show of honor on the part of the Count himself, and on that of his friends. When fairly on their feet, they courteously returned the greetings.

"Peace be with thee, son, and with this cavalier and servitor of the Church!" said Father Bonifacius, signing with the rapid manner in which a Catholic priest scatters his benedictions. "St. Benedict and the Virgin take ye all in their holy keeping! I trust, noble Emich, we have not given thee cause of vexation, by some little delay?"

"Thou never comest amiss, father, be it at morn, or be it at even; I esteem Hartenburg more than honored, when thy reverend head passeth beneath its portals."

"We had every desire to embrace thee, son, but certain offices of religion, that may not be neglected, kept us from the pleasure. But let us within; for I fear the evening air may do injury to those that are uncloaked."

At this considerate suggestion, Emich, with much show of respect to his guests, ushered them into the apartment he had himself so lately quitted. Here recommenced the show of those wily courtesies which, in that semi-barbarous and treacherous age, often led men to a heartless and sometimes to a blasphemous trifling with the most sacred obligations, to effect their purposes, and which, in our times, has degenerated to a deception, that is more measured perhaps, but which is scarcely less sophisticated and vicious. Much was said of mutual satisfaction at this opportunity of commingling spirits, and the blunt professions of the sturdy but politic baron, were more than met by the pretending sanctity and official charity of the priest.

The Abbot of Limburg and his companions had come to the intended feast with vestments that partially concealed their characters; but when the outer cloaks and the other garments were removed, they remained in the usual attire of their order, the prelate being distinguished from his inferiors by those symbols of clerical rank, which it was usual for one of his authority to display, when not engaged in the ministrations of the altar.

When the guests were at their ease, the conversation took a less personal direction, for though rude and unnurtured as his own war-horse, as regards most that is called cultivation in our bookish days, Emich of Hartenburg wanted for none of the courtesies that became his rank, more especially as civilities of this nature were held to be worthy of a feudal lord, and in that particular region.

" 'Tis said, reverend Abbot," continued the host, pushing the discourse to a point that might favor his own secret views, that our common master, the Prince Elector, is sorely urged by his enemies, and that there are even fears a stranger may usurp the rule in the noble Castle of Heidelberg. Hast thou

heard aught of his late distresses, or of the necessities that bear upon his house?"

"Masses have been said for his benefit in all our chapels, and there are hourly prayers that he may prevail against his enemies. In virtue of a concession made to the abbey, by our common father at Rome, we offer liberal indulgences, too, to all that take up arms in this behalf."

"Thou art much united in love with Duke Friedrich, holy prelate!" muttered Emich.

"We owe him such respect as all should willingly pay to the strong temporal arm that shields them; our serious fealty is due alone to heaven. But how comes it that so stout a baron, one so much esteemed in warlike exercises, and so well known in dangerous enterprises, rests in his doublet, at a time when his sovereign's throne is tottering? We had heard that thou wert summoning thy people, Herr Count, and thought it had been in the Elector's interest."

"Friedrich hath not of late given me cause to love him. If I have called my vassals about me, 'tis because the times teach every noble to be wary of his rights. I have consorted so much of late with my cousin of Viederbach, this self-denying Knight of Rhodes, that martial thoughts will obtrude even on the brain of one, peaceful and homebred as thy poor neighbor and penitent."

The Abbot bowed and smiled, like one who gave full credit to the speaker's words, while a by-play arose between the wandering and houseless knight, the abbé, and the brothers of Limburg. In this manner did a few minutes wear away, when a flourish of trumpets announced that the expected banquet awaited its guests. Menials lighted the party to the hall in which the board was spread, and much ceremonious form was observed in assigning to each of the individuals the place suited to his rank and character. Count Emich, who in

common was of a nature too blunt and severe to waste his efforts in superfluous breeding, now showed himself earnest to please, for he had at heart an object that he knew was in danger of being baffled by the more practised artifices of the monks. During the preliminary movements of the feast, which had all the gross and all the profuse hospitality which distinguished such entertainments, he neglected no customary observance. The robust and sensual Abbot was frequently plied with both cup and dish, while the inferior monks received the same agreeable attentions from Albrecht of Viederbach, and Monsieur Latouche, who, notwithstanding it suited his convenience to pass through life under the guise of a churchman, was none the worse at board or revel. As the viands and the generous liquors began to operate on the physical functions of the brothers, however, they insensibly dropped their masks, and each discovered more of those natural qualities, which usually lay concealed from casual observation.

It was a rule of the Benedictines to practise hospitality. The convent door was never closed against the wayfarer, and he who applied for shelter and food was certain of obtaining both, administered more or less in a manner suited to the applicant's ordinary habits. The practice of a virtue so costly was a sufficient pretence for accumulating riches, and he who travels at this day in Europe will find ample proofs that the means of carrying into effect this law of the order were abundantly supplied. Abbeys of this particular class of monks are still of frequent occurrence in the forest cantons of Switzerland, Germany, and in most of the other Catholic states. But the gradual and healthful transfer of political power from clerical to laical hands, has long since shorn them of their temporal lustre. Many of these abbots were

formerly princes of the empire, and several of the communities exercised sovereign sway over territories that have since taken to themselves the character of independent states.

While the spiritual charge and the mortifications believed to characterize a brotherhood of Benedictines, were more especially left to a subordinate monk termed the prior, the abbot, or head of the establishment, was expected to preside not only over the temporalities, but at the board. This frequent communication with the vulgar interests of life, and the constant indulgence in its grosser gratifications, were but ill adapted to the encouragement of the monastic virtues. We have already remarked that the intimate connexion between the interests of life and those of the church is destructive of apostolical character. This blending of God with Mammon, this device of converting the revealed ordinances of the Master of the Universe into a species of buttress to uphold temporal sway, though habit has so long rendered it familiar to the inhabitants of the other hemisphere, and even to a large portion of those who dwell in this, is, in our American eyes, only a little removed from blasphemy; but the triumphs of the press, and the changes made by the steady advances of public opinion, have long since done away with a multitude of still more equivocal usages, that were as familiar to those who existed three centuries ago, as our own customs to us at this hour. When prelates were seen in armor, leading their battalions to slaughter, it is not to be supposed that the other dignitaries of this privileged class, would be more tender of appearances than was exacted by the opinions of the age.

Wilhelm of Venloo, known since his elevation as Bonifacius of Limburg, was not possessed of all that temporal authority, however, which tempted so many of his peers to sin. Still he was the head of

a rich, powerful, and respected brotherhood, that had many allodial rights in lands beyond the abbey walls, and which was not without its claims to the fealty of sundry dependants. Of vigorous mind and body, this dignified churchman commanded much influence by means of a species of character that often crosses us in life, a sturdy independence of thought and action that imposed on the credulous and timid, and which sometimes caused the bold and intelligent to hesitate. His reputation was far greater for learning than for piety, and his besetting sin was well known to be a disposition to encounter the shock between the powers of mind and matter, as both were liable to be affected by deep potations and gross feeding—a sort of degeneracy to which all are peculiarly liable, who place an unnatural check on the ordinary and healthful propensities of nature—just as one sense is known to grow in acuteness as it is deprived of a fellow. The abbot loosened his robe, and threw his cowl still farther from his neck, while Emich pledged him in Rhenish, cup after cup; and by the time the meats were removed, and the powers of digestion, or we might better say of retention, would endure no more, his heavy cheeks became flushed, his bright, deeply-seated, and searching gray eyes flashed with a species of ferocious delight, and his lip frequently quivered, as the clay gave eloquent evidence of its enjoyment. Still his voice, though it had lost its rebuked and schooled tones, was firm, deep, and authoritative, and ever and anon he threw into his discourse some severe and pointed sarcasm, bitingly scornful. His subordinates, too, gave similar proofs of the gradual lessening of their caution, though in degrees far less imposing, we had almost said less grand, than that which rendered the sensual excitement of their superior so remarkable. Albrecht and the abbé also betrayed, each in his own manner,

the influence of the banquet, and all became garrulous, disputative, and noisy.

Not so with Emich of Hartenburg. He had eaten in a manner to do justice to his vast frame and bodily wants, and he drank fairly; but, until this moment, the nicest observer would have been puzzled to detect any decrease of his powers. The blue of his large leaden eyes became brighter, it is true, but their expression was yet in command, and their language courteous.

"Thou dost but little compliment to my poor fare, most holy Abbot," cried the host, as he witnessed a lingering look of the prelate, whose eye followed the delicious fragments of a wild boar from the hall —"If the knaves have stinted thee in the choice of morsels, by St. Benedict! but the mountains of my chase can still furnish other animals of the kind—How now——"

"I pray thee, mercy, noble Emich! Thy forester hath done thee fair justice with his spear; more savory beast never smoked at table."

"It fell by the hand of young Berchthold, the burgher of Deurckheim's orphan. 'Tis a bold youth in the forest, and I doubt not, his will one day be a ready hand in battle. Thou knowest him I mean, father, for he is often at thy abbey confessionals."

"He is better known to the prior than to one so busied with worldly cares as I. Is the youth at hand? I would fain render him thanks."

"Hear ye that, varlet! Bid my head forester appear. The reverend and noble Abbot of Limburg owes him grace."

"Didst thou say the youth was of Deurckheim?"

"Of that goodly town, reverend priest; and, though reduced by evil chances to be the ranger of my woods, a lad of mettle in the chase, and of no bad discourse in moments of ease."

"Thou claimest hard service, Cousin of Harten-

burg, of these peaceful townsmen! Were they left freely to choose between the ancient duty of our convent, and this stirring life thou leadest the artisans, we should have more penitents within our walls."

The feality of Deurckheim was a long mooted point between the corporation of Limburg and the house of Leiningen, and the allusion of the monk was not thrown away upon his host. Emich's brow clouded, and for a moment it threatened a storm; but, recovering his self-command, he answered in a tone of hilarity, though with sufficient coolness:—

"Thy words remind me of present affairs, reverend Bonifacius, and I thank thee that thou hast put a sudden check on festivities which were getting warm without an object." The Count arose, and filled to the brim a cup of horn, elaborately ornamented with gold, drawing the attention of all at table to himself by the action. "Nobles and reverend servants of God," he continued, "I drink to the health and happiness of the honored Wilhelm of Venloo, the holy Abbot of Limburg, and my loving neighbor. May his brotherhood never know a worse guide, and may the lives and contentment of all that now belong to it, be as lasting as the abbey walls."

Emich concluded the potent cup at a single draught. In order to do honor to the mitred monk, there had been placed by the side of Bonifacius, a vessel of agate richly decorated with jewelry, an heir-loom of the house of Leiningen. While his host was speaking, the looks of the latter watched every expression of his countenance, through gray, overhanging, shaggy brows, that shaded the upper part of his face like a screen of shrubbery planted to shut out prying eyes from a close; and he paused

when the health was given. Then, rising in his tr--- he quaffed a compliment in return.

·-lr of this pure and wholesome liquor," he s. he noble Emich of Leiningen, to all of his ancie l illustrious house, to his and their present hopes, and to their final deliverance. May this goodly hold, and the happiness of its lord, endure as long as those walls of Limburg of which the Count has spoken, and which, were his loving wishes consulted, would doubtless stand for ever."

"By the life of the emperor, learned Bonifacius!" exclaimed Emich, striking his fist on the table with force, "you as much exceed one of my narrow wit in wishes, as in godliness and other excellencies! But I pretend not to set limits to my desires in your behalf, and throw the fault of my imperfect speech on a youth that had more to do with the sword than with the breviary. And now let us to serious concerns. It may not be known to you, Cousin of Viederbach, or to this obliging churchman who honors Hartenburg with his presence, that there has been subject of amicable dispute between the brotherhood of Limburg and my unworthy house, touching the matter of certain wines, that are believed by the one party to be its dues, and by the other to be a mere pious grace accorded to the church——"

"Nay, noble Emich," interrupted the Abbot, "we have never held the point to be disputable in any manner. The lands in question are held of us in soccage; and, in lieu of bodily service, we have long since commuted for the produce of vines that might be named."

"I cry you mercy; if there be dues at all, they come of naught else than knight's service. None of my name or lineage ever paid less to mortal!"

"Let it be thus," Bonifacius answered more

mildly. "The question is of the amount of liquor, and not of the tenure whence it comes."

"Thou sayest right, wise Abbot, and I cry mercy of these listeners. State thou the matter, reverend Bonifacius, that our friends may know the humor on which we are madly bent."

The Count of Hartenburg succeeded in swallowing his rising ire, and made a gesture of courtesy towards the Abbot, as he concluded. Father Bonifacius rose again, and notwithstanding the physical ravages that excess was making within, it was still with the air of calmness and discipline that became his calling.

"As our upright and esteemed friend has just related," he said, "there is truly a point, of a light but unseemly nature to exist between so dear neighbors, open between him and us servants of God. The Counts of Leiningen have long considered it a pleasure to do favor to the Church, and in this just and commendable spirit, it is now some fifty years that, at the termination of each vintage, without regard to seasons or harvest, without stooping to change their habits at every change of weather, they have paid to our brotherhood——"

"Presented, priest!"

"Presented,—if such is thy will, noble Emich,—fifty casks of this gentle liquor that now warms our hearts towards each other, with brotherly and praiseworthy affection. Now, it has been settled between us, to avoid all future motive of controversy, and either the better to garnish our cellars, or to relieve the house of Hartenburg altogether of future imposition, that it shall be decided this night, whether the tribute henceforth shall consist of one hundred casks, or of nothing."

"By're Lady! A most important issue, and one likely to impoverish or to enrich!" exclaimed the Knight of Rhodes.

"As such we deem it," continued the monk, "and in that view, parchments of release, with all due appliances and seals, have been prepared by a clerkly scholar of Heidelberg. This indenture, duly executed," he added, drawing from his bosom the instruments in question, "yieldeth to Emich all the Abbey's rights to the vines in dispute, and this wanteth but his sign of arms and noble name, to double their present duty."

"Hold!" cried the Chevalier of the Cross, whose faculties began already to give way, though it was only in the commencement of the debauch: "Here is matter might puzzle the Grand Turk, who sits in judgment in the very seat of Solomon! If thou renderest thy claims, and my cousin Emich yieldeth double tribute-money, both parties will be the worse, and neither possessed of the liquor!"

"In a merry mood, it hath been proposed that there shall be the trial of love and not of battle, between us, for the vines. The question is of liquor, and it is agreed,—St. Benedict befriend me, if there be sin in the folly! to try on whose constitution the disputed liquor is the most apt to work good or evil. Let the Count of Hartenburg give to his parchment the virtue that hath already been given to this of ours, and we shall leave both in some place of observation;—then, when he alone is able to rise and seize on both, let him give the victor's cry; but should he fail of that power, and there be a servant of the Church ready, and able to grasp the instruments, why let him go, and think no more of land that he hath right merrily lost."

"By St. John of Jerusalem, but this is a most unequal contest—three monks against one poor baron, in a trial of heads!"

"Nay, we think more of our honor, than to permit this wrong. The Count of Hartenburg hath full right to call in equal succor, and I have taken thee,

gallant cavalier of Rhodes, and this learned Abbé, to be his chosen backers!"

"Let it be so!" cried the two in question,—"We ask no better service than to drain Count Emich's cellars to his honor and profit!"

But the lord of the hold had taken the matter, as indeed it was fully understood between the principals, to be a question on which depended a serious amount of revenue, for all futurity. The wager had arisen, in one of those wild contests for physical and gross supremacy, which characterize ages and countries of imperfect civilization; for next to deeds in arms and other manful exercises, like those of the chase and saddle, it was deemed honorable to be able to undergo the trials of the festive board with impunity. Nor should it occasion surprise to find churchmen engaged in these encounters; for, independently of our writing of an age when they appeared in the field, there is sufficient evidence that our own times are not entirely purified from so coarse abuses of the gown. But Bonifacius of Limburg, though a man of extensive learning and strong intellectual qualities, had a weakness on this particular point, for which we may be driven to seek an explanation in his peculiar animal construction. He was of a powerful frame and sluggish temperament, both of which required strong excitement to be wrought up to the highest point of physical enjoyment; and neither the examples around him, nor his own particular opinions, taught him to avoid a species of indulgence that he found so agreeable to his constitution. With these serious views of a contest, to which neither party would probably have consented, had not each great confidence in himself as a well-tried champion, both Emich and the Abbot required that the instruments should be openly read. The discharge of this duty was assigned to Monsieur Latouche, who forthwith

proceeded to wade through a torrent of unintelligible terms, that were generated in the obscurity of feudal times for the benefit of the strong, and which are continued to our own period through pride of professional knowledge, a little quickened by a view to professional gain. On the subject of the true consideration of the respective releases, the instruments themselves were silent, though nothing material was wanting to give them validity, especially when supported by a good sword; or the power of the Church, to which the parties looked respectively in the event of flaws.

Count Emich listened warily as his guest the Abbé read clause after clause of the deed. Occasionally his eye wandered to the firm countenance of the Abbot, betraying habitual distrust of his hereditary and powerful enemy, but it was quickly riveted again on the heated features of the reader.

"This is well," he said, when both papers had been examined: "These vines are to remain for ever with me and mine, without claim from any grasping churchman, so long as grass shall grow or water run, or henceforth they pay double tribute, a tax that will leave little for the cellar of their rightful lord."

"Such are our terms, noble Emich. But to confirm the latter condition, thy seal and name are wanting to the instrument."

"Were the latter to be written by a good sword, none could do the office better than this poor arm, reverend Abbot; but thou knowest well, that my youth was too much given to warlike and other manly exercises befitting my rank, to allow much time for acquiring clerkly skill. By the holy Virgins of Koeln! It were, in sooth, a shame to confess, that one of my class in these stirring times had leisure for such lady games! Bring hither an eagle's feather—hand of mine never yet touched aught

from meaner wing—that I may do justice to the monks."

The necessary implements being produced, the Count of Hartenburg proceeded to execute the instrument on his part. The wax was speedily attached and duly impressed with the bearings of Leiningen, for the noble wore a signet-ring of massive size, ready at all times to give this token of his will. But when it became necessary to subscribe the name, a signal was made to a domestic, who disappeared in quest of the Count's man of charge. This individual manifested some reluctance to perform the customary office, but, as there was just then a clamorous dialogue among the party at table, he seized the moment to examine into the nature of the document, and the consideration that was to decide the ownership of the vineyard. Grinning in satisfaction, at a species of payment in which he held it to be impossible Lord Emich could fail to acquit himself honorably, the dependant took the hand of his master, and, accustomed to the duty, he so guided it as to leave a very legible and creditable signature. When this had been done, and the papers were properly witnessed, the Count of Hartenburg glanced suspiciously from the deed in his hand to the indomitable face of the Abbot, as if he still half repented of the act. "Look you, Bonifacius," he said, shaking a finger,—"Should there be flaw, or doubt of any intention in this our covenant, sword of mine shall cut it!"

"First earn the right, Count of Leiningen. The deeds are of equal virtue, and he who would lay claim to their benefits must win the wager. We are but poor brothers of St. Benedict, and little worthy to be named with warlike barons and devoted followers of St. John, but we have an humble trust in our patron."

"By St. Benedict, it shall pass for a miracle, if

thou prevailest!" shouted Emich, yielding the deed in a burst of delight. "Away with these cups of agate and horn, and bring forth vessels of glass, that all may see we deal fairly by each other, in this right manly encounter. Look to your wits, monks.—By the word of a cavalier, your Latin will do little service in this dispute."

"Our trust is in our patron," answered Father Siegfried, who had already done so much honor to the banquet, as to give reason to believe, that, in his case, the fraternity leaned upon a fragile staff. "He never yet deserted his children, when fairly enlisted in a good cause."

"You are cunning in reasons, fathers," put in the knight—"and I doubt not that sufficient excuses would be forthcoming, were you pushed to justify service to the devil."

"We suffer for the church," was the Abbot's answer, after taking a bumper in obedience to a signal from his host. "We hold it to be commendable to struggle with the flesh, that our altars may flourish."

As soon as executed, the two deeds had been placed on a high and curiously wrought vessel of silver, that contained cordials, and which occupied the centre of the board, and more fitting cups having been brought, the combatants were compelled to swallow draught after draught, at signals from Emich, who, like a true knight, saw that each man showed loyalty. But, as the conflict was between men of great experience in this species of contention, and as it endured hours, we deem it unworthy of the theme to limit its description to a single chapter. Before closing the page, however, we shall digress for a moment, in order to express our opinions concerning the great human properties involved in this sublime strife.

It has been the singular fortune of America to be the source of numberless ingenious theories, that,

taking their rise in the other hemisphere, have been let loose upon the world to answer ends that we shall not stop to investigate. The dignified and beneficed prelate maintains there is no worship of God within our land, probably because there are no dignified and beneficed prelates; a sufficiently logical conclusion for all who believe in the efficacy of that self-denying class of Christians; while the neophyte, in some lately invented religion, denounces us all in a body, as so many miserable bigots, devoted to Christ! In this manner is a pains-taking and plain-dealing nation of near fourteen millions of souls kept, as it were, in abeyance in the opinions of the rest of mankind, one deeming them as much beyond, as another fancies them to be short of, truth. In the fearful catalogue of our deadly sins, is included a propensity to indulge in excesses similar to that it is now our office to record. As we are confessedly democrats, dram-drinking in particular has been pronounced to be a "democratic vice."

It has been our fortune to have lived in familiarity with a greater variety of men, either considered in reference to their characters or their conditions, than ordinarily falls to the lot of any one person. We have visited many lands, not in the capacity of a courier, but staidly and soberly, as becomes a grave occupation, setting up our household gods, and abiding long enough to see with our eyes and to hear with our ears; and we feel emboldened to presume on these facts, in order to express a different opinion, amid the flood of assertions that has been made by those who certainly have no better claim to be heard. And, firstly, we shall here say that, as in the course of justice, an intelligent, upright, single-minded, and discriminating witness is, perhaps, the rarest of all desirable instruments in effecting its sacred ends, so do we acknowledge a traveller, entitled to full credit,

to be the mortal of all others the least likely to be found.

The art of travelling, we apprehend, is far more practised than understood. To us it has proved a laborious, harassing, puzzling, and oftentimes a painful pursuit. To divest oneself of impressions made in youth; to investigate facts without referring their merits to a standard bottomed on a foundation no better than habit; to analyze, and justly to compare the influence of institutions, climate, natural causes, and practice; to separate what is merely exception from that which forms the rule; or even to obtain and carry away accurate notions of physical things, and, most of all, to possess the gift of imparting these results comprehensively and with graphical truth, requires a combination of time, occasion, previous knowledge, and natural ability, that rarely falls to the lot of a single individual. One assumes the task prepared by acquaintance with established opinions, which are commonly no more than prejudices, the result of either policy, or of the very difficulties just enumerated; and he goes on his way, not only ready but anxious to receive the proofs of what he expects, limiting his pleasure to the sort of delight, that dependent minds feel in following the course pointed out by those that are superior. As the admitted peculiarities of every people are sufficiently apparent, he converts self-evident facts into collateral testimony, and faithfully believes and imagines all that is concealed on the strength of that which is obvious. For such a traveller time wears away men and things in vain; he accords his belief to the last standard opinion of his sect, with a devotion to convention that might purchase salvation in a better cause. To him Vesuvius is just as high, produces the same effect in the view, and has exactly the same outline as before the crater fell; and he watches the workmen disinterring a house

at its base, and goes away rejoicing at having witnessed the resurrection of a Roman dwelling after eighteen hundred years of interment, simply because it is the vulgar account that Pompeii was lost for that period. If he should happen to be a scholar, what is his delight in following a cicerone (a title assumed by some wily *servitore di Piazza*) to the little garden that overlooks the Roman Forum, and in fancying that he stands upon the Tarpeian Rock! His faith in moral qualities, his graduation of national virtue, and his views of manners, are equally the captives of the last popular rumor. A Frenchman may roll incontinently in the *gras de Paris*, filled with an alcohol inflammable as gunpowder, and in his eyes it shall pass for pure animal light-heartedness, since it is out of all rule for a Frenchman to be intoxicated, while the veriest tyro knows that the nation dances to a man! The gallant general, the worshipful alderman, the right honorable adviser of the king, may stammer around a subject for half an hour, in St. Stephen's, in a manner to confound all conclusion, and generalize so completely as to baffle particularity, and your hearer shall go away convinced of the excellence of the great school of modern eloquence, because the orator has been brought up at the "feet of Gamaliel." When one thoroughly imbued with this pliant faculty, gets into a foreign land, with what a diminished reverence for his own does he journey! As few men are endowed with sufficient penetration to pierce the mists of received opinion, fewer still are they that are so strong in right as to be able to stem its tide. He who precedes his age is much less likely to be heard, than he who lingers in its rear; and when the unwieldy body of the mass reaches the eminence on which he has long stood the object of free comment, it may be assumed as certain, that they who were his bitterest deriders when his doctrine was new,

will be foremost in claiming the honors of the advance. In short, to instruct the world, it is necessary to watch the current, and to act on the public mind like the unseen rudder, by slight and imperceptible variations, avoiding, as a seaman would express it, any very rank sheer, lest the vessel should refuse to mind her helm and go down with the stream.

We have been led into these reflections, by frequent opportunities of witnessing the facility with which opinions are adopted concerning ourselves, because they have come from the pens of those who have long contributed to amuse and instruct us, but which are perfectly valueless, both from the unavoidable ignorance of those who utter them, and from the hostile motives that gave them birth. To that class which would wish to put in a claim to *bon ton*, by undervaluing their countrymen, we have nothing to say, since they are much beyond improvement, and are quite unable to understand all the high and glorious consequences dependent on the great principles of which this republic is the guardian. Their fate was long since settled by a permanent and wise provision of human feeling; but, presuming on the opportunities mentioned, and long habits of earnest observation in the two hemispheres, we shall conclude this digression by merely adding, that it is the misfortune of man to abuse the gifts of God, let him live in what country or under what institutions he may. Excess of the description in question is the failing of every people, nearly in proportion to their means; nor are there any certain preventives against a vice so destructive, but absolute want, or a high cultivation of the reasoning faculties.

He who has accurately ascertained how far the people of this republic are behind or before the inhabitants of other lands, in mental improvement and

moral qualities, will not be far from the truth in assigning to them a correspondent place in the scale of sobriety. It is true that many foreigners will be ready enough to deny this position, but we have had abundant opportunities of observing, that all those who visit our shores do not come sufficiently prepared, by observation at home, to make just comparisons, and what we have here said has not been ventured without years of close and honest investigation. We shall gladly hail the day when it can be said, that not an American exists, so lost to himself as to trifle with the noblest gift of the Creator; but we cannot see the expediency of attaining an end, desirable even as this, by the concession of premises that are false.



CHAPTER VII.

> "What a thrice-double ass
> Was I, to take this drunkard for a god!
> *Caliban.*

Physical qualities are always prized in proportion to the value that is attached to those that are purely intellectual. So long as power and honor depend on the possession of brute force, strength and agility are endowments of the last importance, on the same principle that they render the tumbler of more account in his troop; and he who has ever had occasion to mingle much with the brave, and subject to a qualification that will readily be understood, we might add, the noble savages of this continent, will have remarked, that, while the orators are in general a class who have cultivated their art for want of qualifications to excel in that which is deemed still more honorable, the first requisite in the war-

rior is stature and muscle. There exists a curious document to prove how much even their successors, a people in no degree deficient in acuteness, have been subject to a similar influence. We allude to a register that was made of the thews and sinews among the chiefs of the army of Washington, during the moment of inaction that preceded the recognition of Independence. By this report it would seem, that the animal entered somewhat into the ideas of our fathers, when they made their original selection of leaders, a circumstance that we attribute to the veneration that man is secretly disposed to show to physical perfection, until a better training and experience have taught him there is still a superior power. Our first impressions are almost always received through the senses, and the connexion between martial prowess and animal force seems so natural, that we ought not to be surprised that a people so peaceful and unpractised, in their simplicity, betrayed a little of this deference to appearances. Happily, if they sometimes put matter into stations which would have been better filled by mind, the honesty and zeal that were so general in the patriotic ranks carried the country through in triumph.

It was a consequence of the high favor enjoyed by all manly or physical qualities in the sixteenth century, that men were even prized for their excesses. Thus he who could longest resist the influence of liquor was deemed, in a more limited sense, as much a hero as he who swung the heaviest mace, or pointed the surest cannon in battle. The debauch in which the Abbot of Limburg and his neighbor Emich of Leiningen, were now engaged, was one of no unusual nature; for, in a country in which prelates appeared in so many other doubtful characters, it should not excite surprise that some of the class were willing to engage in a strife that

had little danger, while it was so highly in favor with the noble and the great.

The reader will have seen that great progress had been made towards the issue of the celebrated encounter it is our duty to relate, even before its precise object had been formally introduced among the contending parties. But while the monks came to the struggle apprized of its motive, and prepared at all points to maintain the reputation of their ancient and hospitable brotherhood, the Count of Leiningen, with a sullen reliance on his own powers, that was somewhat increased by his contempt for priestcraft, had neglected to bestow the same care on his auxiliaries. It is scarcely necessary to add that both the Abbé and the knight of Rhodes had become heated to garrulousness, before they perfectly understood the nature of the service that was expected at their hands, or, we ought rather to say, of their heads. With this explanation we shall resume the narrative, taking up its thread some two hours later than the moment when it was last dropped.

At this particular juncture of the strife, Fathers Siegfried and Cuno had become thoroughly warmed with their endeavors, and habitual and profound respect for the Abbot was gradually giving way before the quickening currents of their blood. The eyes of the former glistened with a species of forensic ferocity, for he was ardently engaged on a controversial point with Albrecht of Viederbach, all of whose faculties appeared to be rapidly exhaling with his potations. The other Benedictine and the Abbé from time to time mingled in the dispute, in the character of seconds, while the two most interested in the issue sat, warily collecting their powers, and sternly regarding each other, like men who knew they were not engaged in idle sport.

"This is well, with thy tales of L'Isle Adam, and

the Ottoman power," continued Father Siegfried, pursuing the discourse from a point, beyond which we consider it unnecessary to record all that passed —"This will do to repeat to the dames of our German courts, for the journey between these Rhenish plains and yonder island of Rhodes is far, and few are inclined to make it, in order to convict thy chiefs of neglect, or their sworn followers of forgetfulness of their vows."

"By the quality of my order! reverend Benedictine, thou pushest words to unseemliness! Is it not enough, that the chosen and the gentlest of Europe should devote soul and body to services that would better become thy lazy order—that all that is noble and brave should abandon the green fields and pleasant rivers of their native lands, to endure hot suns and sultry winds from Africa, in order to keep the unbeliever in his limits, but they must be taunted with gibes like these? Go, count the graves and number the living, if thou wouldst learn the manner in which our illustrious master held out against Solyman, or wouldst know the services of his knights!"

"It would sound ill in thy ears, were I to bid thee enter purgatory, to inquire into the fruits of our masses and prayers, and yet one and the other are equally easy to perform. Thou knowest well, that Rhodes is no longer a Christian island, and that none bearing the cross dare be seen on its shores. Go to, Count Albrecht, thy order is fallen into disuse, and it is better where it is, hid beneath the snowy mountains of the country of Nice, than it might be in the front ranks of Christendom. There is not a crone in Germany that does not bewail the backsliding of an order so esteemed of old, or a maiden that does not speak lightly of its deeds!"

"Heavenly patience! hearest thou this, Monsieur Latouche? and from the mouth of a chanting Benedictine, who passeth his days between safe walls of

stone, here in the heart of the Palatinate, and his nights on a warm pallet, beyond sound even of the rushing winds, unless, in sooth, he be not bent on offices of midnight charity among the believing wives of the faithful!"

"Boy! dost presume to scandalize the Church, and dare its anger?" demanded Bonifacius, in a voice of thunder.

"Reverend Abbot," answered Albrecht, crossing himself, for habit and policy equally held him subject to the predominant authority of the age, "the little I say is more directed to the man than to his cloth."

"Let him give utterance to all he fancies," interrupted the wily Siegfried. "Is not a knight of Rhodes immaculate, and shall we refuse him right of speech?"

"It is held at the court of the chivalrous Valois," observed the Abbé, who perceived it was necessary to interfere, in order to preserve the peace, "that the defence of Rhodes was of exceeding valor, and few survived it, who did not meet with high honors from Christian hands. We have seen numberless of the brave knights among us, in the most esteemed houses of Paris, and at the merry castle of Fontainebleau, and believe me, none were more sought, or better honored. The scars of even Marignano and of Pavia are less prized than those given by the hands of the infidel."

"Thou dost well, my learned and self-denying brother," answered Siegfried, with a sneer, "to remind us of the fight of Pavia, and of thy great master's present abode! Are these tidings of late from the Castiles, or is it not permitted to thy prince to dispatch couriers to his own capital?"

"Nay, reverend monk, thou pressest with unkind allusions, and forgettest that, like thee, we are both servitors of the Church."

"We count thee not—one nor the other. Martyred St. Peter! what would become of thy keys, were they intrusted to the keeping of such hands!—Go, doff thy vanities—lay aside that attire of velvet, if thou wouldst be known as of the flock."

"Master Latouche," exclaimed Emich, who was boiling with indignation, but who preserved his self-command in order to circulate the cups, and to see that each man did true service in the prescribed contest, "tell him of his brother of Wittenberg, and of these late doings in the hive. Stick that thorn into his side, and thou shalt see him shrink like a jaded and galled steed, under a pointed spur! Who art thou, and why dost thou disturb my pleasures?"

This sudden interruption of himself was addressed by the baron to a youth, in neat but modest attire, who had just entered the banqueting-room, and who, passing by the menial that filled the glasses at the beck of his master's hand, now stood, with a firm but respectful mien, at the elbow of the speaker.

"'Tis Berchthold, my lord's forester. They bid me come to do your pleasure, noble Count."

"Thou art seasonably arrived to keep the peace between a sworn knight of Rhodes and a garrulous monk of Limburg. This reverend Abbot would do thee favor, boy."

Berchthold bowed respectfully, and turned towards the prelate.

"Thou art the orphan of our ancient liegeman, he who bore thy name, and was well esteemed among the townsmen of Deurckheim?"

"I am the son of him your reverence means, but that he was liegeman of any of Limburg, I deny."

"Bravely answered, boy!" shouted Emich, striking his fist on the table so hard as to threaten destruction to all it held: "Ay, and as becomes thy master's follower! Hast enough, Father Bonifacius, or wilt dip deeper into the youth's catechism?"

"The young man has been tutored to respect his present ease," returned the Abbot, affecting indifference equally to the exultation of the Count and to the disrespect of his forester. "When he next comes to our confessionals, there will be occasion to give him other schooling."

"God's truth! that hour may never happen. We are half disposed to live on in our sins, and to take soldier's fortune, in these stirring times; which is ever the chance of sudden death, without the church's passport. We are fast getting of this mind—are we not, brave Berchthold?"

The youth bowed respectfully, but without answering, for he saw by the inflamed countenances and swimming eyes of all at table, that the moment was one in which explanations would be useless. Had it been possible to doubt the cause of the scene he witnessed, the manner in which glass after glass was swallowed, at the will of the cup-bearer, would have explained its nature. But, far advanced as Father Bonifacius had now become in inebriety, in common with the other guests, he retained enough of his faculties, to see that the words of Emich contained an allusion of a dangerously heretical character.

"Thou art resolved to despise our counsel and our warnings!" he exclaimed, glancing fiercely at one and the other. 'Twere better to say at once, that thy wish is to see the walls of Limburg Abbey lying on the side of Limburg hill."

"Nay, reverend and honored priest, thou pushest a few hasty words beyond their meaning. What is it to a Count of the noble house of Leiningen, that a few monks find shelter for their heads, and ease for their souls, beneath a consecrated roof within cannon-shot of his own towers. If thy walls do not tumble until hand of mine helps to unsettle them, they may stand till the fallen Angel that set them

up, shall aid in their overthrow. Truly, Father Bonifacius, for a godly community, this tale of thy sanctuary's origin makes it of none of the best parentage!"

"Hear ye that!" sputtered Albrecht of Viederbach, who, though his tongue had continued to sound a sort of irregular accompaniment to his cousin's speeches, was no longer able to articulate clearly—"Here ye that! imp of St. Benedict! The devil set ye up, and the devil will be your downfall. L'Isle Adam is a saint to thy holiest; and his—good—sword——"

At this word, the knight of Rhodes succumbed, losing his balance in an animated effort to gesticulate, and fairly falling under the table. A sarcastic smile crossed the Abbot's face, at this overthrow of one of his adversaries, while Emich scowled in disdain at the ignoble exhibition made by his kinsman; who, finding it impossible to rise, resigned himself to sleep on the spot where he had fallen.

"Swallow thy Rhenish, monk, and count not on the slight advantage thou hast got in the overthrow of that prating fool," said the host, whose tones grew less and less amicable, as the plot thickened—"But to a more fitting subject; Berchthold is worthy of his lord, and is a youth that thinks of things as things appear. We may quit thy confessionals for divers reasons, as thou knowest. Here is the Monk of Erfurth! Ha! what think you of his new teaching, and of the manner in which he advises the faithful to come to the altar? You have had him at Rome, and at Worms, and among ye in many councils, and yet the honest man stands fast in all reasonable opinions. Thou hast heard of Luther, is it not so, young Berchthold?"

"'Tis certain, my Lord Count, that few in the Jaergerthal escape the tidings of his name."

"Then are they in danger of a most damnable

heresy!" interrupted Bonifacius, in a voice of thunder. "Why tell me of this driveller of Erfurth, Lord Emich, if thou art not in secret praying that his rebellious wishes may prosper at the Church's cost! But we mark thee, irreverent Count, and hard and griping penance may yet purge thee of these prurient fancies—" Here the Abbot, inflamed as he was with wine and resentment, paused; for the silent monk, Father Cuno, fell from his seat like a soldier shot in battle; the simple inferior having entered into the trial of heads, more with a relish for the liquor than with any thought of victory, and having, in consequence, done so much honor to the potations, as to become an easy sacrifice to the common enemy. The Abbot looked at his prostrate follower with grim indifference, showing by his hard, scowling, and angry eye, that he deemed the loss of little moment to the main result. "What matters the impotency of a fool!" he muttered, turning away to his principal and only dangerous opponent, with a full return of all his angry feelings:—"That the devils are suffered to gain a momentary and specious triumph, we are well aware, Baron of Hartenburg——"

"By my father's bones, proud priest, but thou strangely forgettest thyself! Am I not a prince of Leiningen, that one of the cowl should please to call me less?"

"I should have said the Summer Landgrave!" answered Bonifacius sneeringly, for long-smothered hatred was beginning to break through the feeble barriers that their reeling faculties still preserved. "I crave pardon of your highness; but a short reign leaves brief recollections. Even thy subjects, illustrious Emich, may be forgiven, that they know not their sovereign's title. The coronet that is worn from June to September scarce gets the fit of the head!"

"It was worn longer, Abbot, than ever head of thine will wear a saintly crown. But I forget my ancient house, and the forbearance due to a guest, in honest anger at an artful and malignant monk!"

Bonifacius bowed with seeming composure, and while each appeared to recover his moderation, in a misty recollection of the true affair in hand, the dialogue between the Abbé and Father Siegfried, which had been drowned by the stentorian lungs of the principal disputants, broke out in the momentary pause.

"Thou sayest true, reverend father," said the former, "but were our fair and sprightly dames of France to perform these pilgrimages to distant shrines, of which thou speakest, rude treatment in the wayfaring, evil company, and, haply, designing confessors, might tarnish the present lustre of their graces, and leave them less ornaments to our brilliant and gallant court, than they at present prove. No, I espouse no such dangerous opinions, but endeavor, by gentle persuasion and courtly arguments, to lead their precious souls nearer to the heaven they so well merit, and which it were scarce impious to say, they will so rarely become."

"This may be well for the towering fancies of thy French imaginations, but our slower German minds must be dealt with differently. By the mass! I would give little for the success of the confessor, that should deal only in persuasive and gentle discourse! Here, we throw out manifold hints of damnation, in plainer speech."

"I condemn no usage on speculation, Benedictine; but truly this directness of condemnation would be thought indecorous in our more refined presences. As yet, thou wilt acknowledge, we are less tainted with heresies than thy northern courts."

Here the deep voice of Emich, who had recov-

ered a little self-command, again drowned the by-play of the subordinates.

"We are not children, most reverend Bonifacius," he resumed, "to irritate ourselves with names. That I have been denied the honors and rights of my birth and line, for one come of no direct descent, is admitted; but let it be forgotten. Thou art welcome to my board, and there is no dignitary of the church, or of thy brotherhood, that I esteem more than thee and thine, within a hard ride of these towers. Let us be friends, holy Abbot, and drink to our loving graces."

"Count Emich, I pledge thee, and pray for thee, as thou meritest. If there have been misunderstandings between our convent and thy house, they have come of the misguiding of the devil. We are a peaceful community, and one given more to prayer and a just hospitality, than to any grasping desire to enrich our coffers."

"On these points we will not dwell, father, for it is not easy for baron and abbot, layman and priest, to see at all times with the same eyes. I would that this question of authority in Deurckheim were fairly disposed of, that there might always be good neighborhood in the valley. Our hills shut in no wide plain, like yon of the river, that we must needs turn the little level land we have into a battle-ground. By the mass, most holy Abbot, but thou wouldst do well to dismiss the Elector's troops, and trust this matter between us, to gentle and friendly argument."

"If it were the last prayer I uttered, before passing into the fruition of a self-denying and holy life, princely Emich, thy wish should not want support! Have we not often professed a willingness to refer the question to the Holy Father, or any other high church authority, that can fittingly take cognizance

of so knotty a point. Less than this arbitration would scarce become our apostolic mission."

"God's truth! mein Herr Wilhelm, but ye are too grasping for those who mortify the flesh! Is it meet, I ask ye, that a goodly number of valiant and pains-taking burghers should be led by shaven crowns, in the day of strife, in fair and foul, evil and good, like so many worthless women, who, having lived in the idleness and vanities of gossip and backbiting, are fain to hope that their sex's sins may be hid beneath a monk's frock? Give me up, therefore, this question of Deurckheim, and certain other rights that might be fairly written out, and the saints in Paradise shall not live in more harmony than we of the Jaegerthal."

"Truly, Lord Emich, the means of fitting us for the heavenly state thou namest have not been forgotten, since thou hast made a purgatory of the valley these many years——"

"By the mass, priest, thou again pushest thy remarks beyond discreet speech! In what manner have I done aught to bring this scandal on the neighborhood, beyond a mere forethought to mine own interest. Hast thou not opened thy abbey-gates to receive armed and irreligious men?—are not thy ears hourly wounded by rude oaths, and thy eyes affronted by sights that should be thought unseemly in a sanctuary?—Nay, that thou mayest not suppose I am ignorant of thy hidden intentions, do not the armed bands of Duke Friedrich lie at watch, this very moment, within thy cloisters?"

"We have a just caution of our rights and of the church's honor," answered Bonifacius, who scarce endeavored to conceal the contemptuous smile the question excited.

"Believe me, Abbot of Limburg, so far from being the enemy of our holy religion, I am its sworn friend; else should I long since have joined the pros-

elytes of this brother Luther, and have done thee harm openly."

"'Twere better than to pray at our altars by day, and to plot their fall at night."

"I swear by the life of the Emperor that thou urgest me too far, haughty priest!"

The clamor created by the Abbé and Father Siegfried here caused the two principal speakers to direct their attention, for the moment, to the secondary combatants. From a courtly dispute, the argument had got to be so confused and warm, between the latter, that each raised his voice in a vain endeavor to drown that of his adversary. It was but an instant, before the whirling senses of M. Latouche, who had only maintained his present place in the debauch by fraud, gave way to so rude an assault, and he staggered to a settee, where, gesticulating wildly, he soon sunk at his length, unable to lift his head. Father Siegfried witnessed the retreat of his mercurial foe with a grin of exultation; then he raised a ferocious shout, which, coming from lungs that had so lately chanted to the honor of God, caused the young Berchthold to shudder with horror. But the glazed eyes of the monk, and his failing countenance, betrayed an inability to endure more. After staring wildly about him, with the unmeaning idiotcy of a drunkard, he settled himself in his chair, and closed his eyes in the heavy sleep that nature unwillingly furnishes to those who abuse her gifts.

The Abbot and the Count witnessed the manner in which their respective seconds were thus put *hors de combat*, in sullen silence. Their growing warmth, and the feelings excited by the mention of their several grievances, had insensibly drawn their attention from the progress of the contest, but each now regained a certain glimpse of its nature and of its results; the recollection served to recall the temper of both, for they were too well practised in these

scenes, not to understand the value of presence of mind in maintaining the command of their faculties.

"Our brother Siegfried hath yielded to the frailties of nature, noble Emich," resumed Boniface, smiling as placidly on his remaining companion, as flushed features and a heated eye would permit. "The flesh of priest can endure no more than that of layman, else would he have seen thy flasks drained of their last drop, for better intention never filled grateful heart, in doing honor to the gifts of Providence."

"Ay, thou passest thy debauches to the account of this subtilty, while we of the sword, Master Abbot, sin to-night, and ask forgiveness to-morrow, without other pretence than our pleasures. But the hood of a monk is a mask, and he who wears it thinks he hath a right to the benefit of the disguise. I would I knew, to a boddice, the number of burghers' wives thou hast shrived since Corpus Domini!"

"Jest not with the secrets of the confessional, Count Emich; the subject is too sacred for profane tongues. There has been bitter penance for greater than thou!"

"Nay, mistake me not, holy Abbot," returned the baron, hurriedly crossing himself; "but your bold talkers say there is discontent in Deurckheim on this point, and I deem it friendly to communicate the accusations of the enemy. This is a moment in which our German monks are in danger; for, in sooth, thy brother of Erfurth is no driveller in his cry against Rome."

The eye of Father Boniface flashed fire, for none are so quick to meet, or so violent to resent attacks, on what they consider their rights, as those who have long been permitted to enjoy monopolies, however frail or unjust may be the tenure of their possession.

"In thy heart, rude Emich, thou clingest to this heresy!" he said: "Beware, in what manner thou castest the weight of thy example and name into the scale, against the commands of God and the authority of the church! As for this Luther, a backsliding wretch, that unquiet ambition and love for a professed but misguided nun, having urged to rebellion, the devils are rejoicing in his iniquity, and imps of darkness stand ready to riot in his final and irretrievable fall."

"By the mass! father, to a plain soldier it seemeth better to wive the sister honestly, than to give all this scandal in Deurckheim, and otherwise to do violence to the peace of families on the fair plains of the Palatinate. If brother Luther hath done no more, than thou sayest here, he hath fairly cheated Satan, which is what thy community did of old, when it got the evil spirit to aid in raising thy chapel, and then, with no great regard to a debtor's obligations, sent him away penniless."

"Were the truth known, Emich, I fear it would be found that thou hast faith in this silly legend!"

"If thou hast not outwitted the devil, priest, it hath been that his prudence hath kept him from bargaining with those he knows to be his betters in cunning. By the rood! 'twas a bold spirit that would grapple, wit to wit, with the monks of Limburg!"

Disdain kept the Abbot from answering, for he was too superior to vulgar tradition to feel even resentment at an imputation of this kind. His host perceived that he was losing ground, and he began to see, by the manner in which his senses were slowly receding, that he was in imminent danger of forfeiting the important stake that now depended wholly on his powers of endurance. The Abbot had a well-earned reputation of having the strongest head of all the churchmen of the Palatinate, and Count Emich, who was nowise wanting in physical

excellence of this sort, began to feel that species of failing which is commonly the forerunner, as it is often the cause, of defeat. He swallowed bumper after bumper, with a reckless desire to overwhelm his antagonist, without thought of the inroads that he was producing on his own faculties. Bonifacius, who saw and felt his superiority, willingly indulged his antagonist in this feverish desire to drive the struggle to a premature issue, and several glasses were taken in a sort of sullen defiance, without a syllable issuing from the lips of either. In this strait, the Count turned his swimming eyes towards his attendants, in a vague hope that they who served him so faithfully on ordinary occasions, might aid him in the present desperate emergency.

Young Berchthold Hintermayer stood near his lord, in respectful attendance on his pleasure, for habit prevented him from withdrawing without an order. Enough had fallen from the parties in this singular contest to let him into the secret of its object. He appeared to understand the appeal, and advancing to do the office of cup-bearer, a duty that in truth required some such interference, for he who should have discharged it had been too diligently imitating those at the board, to be able any longer to acquit himself with propriety of his functions.

"If my Lord Abbot would but relieve the passing time," said Berchthold, as he poured out the wine, "by descanting more at large on this heresy, he might be the instrument of saving a doubting soul; I freely confess, that for one, I find much reason to distrust the faith of my fathers."

This was attacking the Abbot on his weakest, not to say his only vulnerable, point.

"Thou shalt smart for this, bold boy!" he cried, striking the table with a clenched fist. "Thou harborest heresies, unfledged and paltry reasoner on

apostolic missions! 'Tis well—'tis well—the impudent avowal is noted!"

Emich made a sign of gratitude, for in his rage the priest took a heavy draught, unconscious of what he was about.

"Nay, my Lord, the most reverend Abbot will pardon imprudent speech in one little gifted in knowledge of this sort. Were it to strike a wild-boar, or to stop a roe-buck, or haply to do harm to my master's enemies, this hand might prove of some account; but is it matter of fair surprise that we of simple wit should be confounded, when the most learned of Germany are at a loss what to believe? I have heard it said, that Master Luther made noble answers in all the councils and wise bodies, in which he hath of late appeared."

"He spoke with the tongue of Lucifer!" roared the Abbot, fairly frothing with the violence of ungovernable rage. "Whence cometh this new and late-discovered religion! Of what stock and root is it? Why hath it been so long hid, and where is its early history? Doth it mount to Peter and Paul, or is it the invention of modern arrogance and rank conceit?"

"Nay, father, the same might be asked of Rome itself, before Rome knew an apostle. The tree is not less a tree after it hath been trimmed of its decayed branches, though it may be more comely."

Father Bonifacius was both acute and learned, and, under ordinary circumstances, even the monk of Wittenberg might have found him a stubborn and subtle casuist; but in his actual condition, the most sophistical remark, if it had but the aspect of reason, was likely to inflame him. Thus assailed, therefore, he exhibited an awful picture of the ferocity of human passions when brutalized by indulgence. His eyes seemed starting from his head, his lips quivered, and his tongue refused its functions. He was now

in the predicament, in which the Count had so lately stood; and, though he foresaw the consequences, with the desperation of an inebriated man, he sought the renewal of his forces in the very agent which had undermined them. Count Emich himself was past intelligible utterance, but eloquence not being his strongest arm, he still maintained sufficient command of his physical powers to continue the conflict. He flourished his hand in defiance, and muttered words that seemed to breathe hatred and scorn. In this manner did a noble of an illustrious and princely house, and a mitred prelate of the church, stand at bay, with little other consciousness of the existence of the nobler faculties of their being, than that connected with the common mercenary object which had induced this trial of endurance.

"The church's malediction on ye all!" Boniface at length succeeded in uttering:—then falling back in his elbowed and well-cushioned chair, he yielded his faculties to the sinister influence of the liquor he had swallowed.

When Emich of Leiningen witnessed the overthrow of his last antagonist, a gleam of intelligence and triumph shot from beneath his shaggy brows. By a desperate effort he raised himself, and stretching forth an arm, he gained possession of the deed by which the community of Limburg formally released its claims upon the products of the disputed vineyards. Arising, with the air of one accustomed to command even in his cups, he signed for his forester to approach, and aided by his young and nervous arm, he tottered from the room, leaving the banqueting-hall, like a deserted field, a revolting picture of human infirmity in its degradation and neglect.

As the Count fell heavily upon his couch, clad as he had been at table, he shook the parchment towards his young attendant, till the folds rattled.

Then closing his eyes, his deep and troubled breathing soon announced, that the victor of this debauch lay like the vanquished, unconscious, feverish, and unmanned.

Thus terminated the well-known debauch of Hartenburg, a feat of physical endurance on the part of the stout baron who prevailed, that gained him little less renown among the boon companions of the Palatinate, than he would have reaped from a victory in the field; and which, strange as it may now appear, derogated but little from any of the qualities of the vanquished.



CHAPTER VIII.

> And from the latticed gallery came a chant
> Of psalms, most saint-like, most angelical,
> Verse after verse sung out most holily."
>
> ROGERS.

THE succeeding day was the Sabbath. The morning of the weekly festival was always announced to the peasants of the Jaegerthal with the usual summons to devotion. The matin bell had been heard on the abbey walls, even before the light penetrated to the bottom of the deep vale; and all the pious had bent, in common, wherever the sounds happened to reach their ears, in praise and thanksgiving. But as the hours wore on, a more elevated display of Roman worship was prepared in the high mass, a ceremony addressed equally to the feelings and the senses.

The sun was fairly above the hills, and the season bland to seduction. The domestic cattle, relieved from their weekly toil, basked against the hill-side, ruminating in contentment, and filled with

the quiet pleasures of their instinct. Children gambolled before the cottage doors; the husbandman loitered, in the habiliments that had borne the fashions of the Haard through many generations, regarding the silent growth of his crops, and the housewife hurried from place to place, in the excitement of simple domestic enjoyment. The month was the most grateful of the twelve, and well filled with hopes. The grass had reached its height, and was throwing out its exuberance, the corn was filling fast, and the vine began to give forth its clusters.

In the midst of this scene of rural tranquillity, the deep-toned bells of the abbey called the flock to its usual fold. Long practice had made the brotherhood of Limburg expert in all the duties that were necessary to the earthly administration of their functions. Even the peals of the bells were regulated and skilful. Note mournfully succeeded note, and there was not a silent dell, for miles, into which the solemn call did not penetrate. Bells were heard too from Deurckheim, and even from the wide plain beyond; but none rose fuller upon the air, or came so sweet and melancholy to the ear, as those which hung in the abbey towers.

Obedient to the summons, there was a gathering of all in the valley towards the gate of Limburg. A crowd appeared also in the direction of the gorge, for devotion, superstition, or curiosity, never failed to attract a multitude on these occasions, to witness mass in that celebrated conventual chapel. Among the latter came equally the sceptical and the believing, the young and the old, the fair and her who deemed it prudent to shade a matronly countenance with the veil, the idle, the half-converted follower of Luther, and the lover of music. It was customary for one of the brothers to preach, when mass was ended; and Limburg had many monks that were

skilled in the subtleties of the times, and some even who had names for eloquence.

With a management and coquetry that enter into most human devices that are intended to act on our feelings, especially in matters that it is not thought safe to confide too much to naked reason, the peals of the bells were continued long, with a view to effect. As group after group arrived, the court of the abbey slowly filled, until there appeared a congregation sufficiently numerous to gratify the self-love of even a clerical star of our own times. There was much grave salutation among the different dignitaries that were here assembled, for of all those who doff the cap in courtesy, perhaps the German is the most punctilious and respectful. As the neighboring city was fully represented in this assembly of the religious and curious, there was also a profitable display of the duties that are due to station. A herald might have obtained many useful hints, had he been there to note the different degrees of simple homage that were paid, from the Burgomaster to the Bailiff. Among the variety of idle and ill-digested remarks that are lavished on the American people and their institutions, it is a received pleasantry to joke on their attachment to official dignities. But he who has not only seen, but observed both his own countrymen and strangers, will have had numberless occasions to remark that this, like most similar strictures, is liable to the imputation of vapidity, and of being proof of a narrow observation. The functionary that is literally a servant of the people, whatever may be his dispositions, can never triumph over his masters; and, though it be an honest and commendable ambition to wish to be so distinguished, we need only examine the institutions to see that in this, as in most other similar circumstances, there is no strict analogy between ourselves and European nations. The remark has probably been made, be-

cause a respect for official authority has been found among us, when there was the expectation, and possibly the wish, to find anarchy.

At the high mass of Limburg there was more ceremony observed in ushering the meanest village dignitary to his place in the church, than would be observed in conducting the head of this great republic to the high station he occupies; and care was had, by an agent of the convent, to see that no one should approach the altar of the Lord of the Universe, without his receiving the deference he might claim in virtue of his temporal rank! Here, where all appear in the temple as they must appear in their graves, equals in dependence on divine support as they are equals in frailty, it will not be easy to understand the hardihood of sophistry which thus teaches humility and penitence with the tongue, and invites to pride and presumption in the practice; and which, when driven to a reason for its conduct, defends itself against the accusation of inconsistency, by recriminating the charge of envy!

There had been a suitable display of ceremony when several functionaries of Deurckheim appeared, but the strongest manifestation of respect was reserved for a burgher, who did not enter the gates, until the people were assembled in the body of the church. This personage, a man whose hair was just beginning to be gray, and whose solid, vigorous frame denoted full health and an easy life, came in the saddle; for at the period of which we write, there was a bridle path to the portal of Limburg. He was accompanied by a female, seemingly his spouse, who rode an ambling nag, bearing on the crupper a crone that clung to her well-formed waist, with easy, domestic familiarity, but like one unused to her seat. A fair-haired, rosy girl sat the pillion of the father, and a serving-man, in a species of official livery, closed the cavalcade.

Sundry of the more substantial citizens of Deurckheim hastened to the reception of this little party, for it was Heinrich Frey, with Meta, her mother, and Ilse, that came unexpectedly to the mass of Limburg. The affluent and flourishing citizen was ushered to the part of the church or chapel, where especial chairs were reserved for such casual visits of the neighboring functionaries, or for any noble that devotion, or accident, might lead to worship at the abbey's altars.

Heinrich Frey was a stout, hale, obstinate, sturdy burgher, in whom prosperity had a little cooled benevolence, but who, had he escaped the allurements of office and the recollection of his own success, might have passed through life, as one that was wanting in neither modesty nor humanity. He was, in short, on a diminished scale, one of those examples of desertion from the ranks of mankind to the corps d'élite of the lucky, that we constantly witness among the worldly and fortunate. While a youth, he had been sufficiently considerate for the burthens and difficulties of the unhappy; but a marriage with a small heiress, and subsequent successes, had gradually brought him to a view of things, that was more in unison with his own particular interests, than it was either philosophical or christian-like. He was a firm believer in that dictum which says none but the wealthy have sufficient interest in society to be intrusted with its control, though his own instinct might have detected the sophistry, since he was daily vacillating between opposing principles, just as they happened to affect his own particular concerns. Heinrich Frey gave freely to the mendicant, and to the industrious; but when it came to be a question of any serious melioration of the lot of either, he shook his head, in a manner to imply a mysterious political economy, and uttered shrewd remarks on the bases of society, and of things as

they were established. In short, he lived in an age when Germany, and indeed all Christendom, was much agitated by a question that was likely to unsettle not only the religion of the day, but divers other vested interests; and he might have been termed the chief of the conservative party, in his own particular circle. These qualities, united to his known wealth; a reputation for high probity, which was founded on the belief that he was fully able to repair any pecuniary wrong he might happen to commit; a sturdy maintenance of his own opinions, that passed with the multitude for the consistency of rectitude; and a perfect fearlessness in deciding against all those who had not the means of disputing his decrees, had procured for him the honor of being the first Burgomaster of Deurckheim.

Were the countenance a certain index of the qualities of the mind, a physiognomist might have been at a loss to discover the motives which had induced Ulricka Hailtzinger, not only the fairest but the wealthiest maiden of the town, to unite herself in marriage with the man we have just delineated. A mild, melancholy, blue eye, that retained its lustre in despite of forty years, a better outline of features than is common to the region in which she dwelt, and a symmetry of arm and bust that, on the other hand, are rather peculiar to the natives of Germany, still furnished sufficient evidence of the beauty for which she must have been distinguished in early life. In addition to these obvious and more vulgar attractions, the matronly partner of Heinrich had an expression of feminine delicacy and intelligence, of elevated views, and even of mysterious aspirations, which rendered her a woman that a nice observer of nature might have loved to study—and have studied to love.

In personal appearance, Meta was a copy of her mother, engrafted on the more ruddy health and less

abstracted habits of the father. Her character will be sufficiently developed as we proceed in the tale. We commit Ilse to the reader's imagination, which will readily conceive the sort of attendant that has been introduced.

The Herr Heinrich did not take possession of his customary post before the high altar, without causing the stir and excitement among the simple peasants of the Jaegerthal, and the truant Deurckheimers who were present, that became his condition in life. But even city importance cannot predominate for ever in the house of God, and the bustle gradually subsiding, expectation began to take precedency of civic rank.

The Abbey of Limburg stood high among the religious communities of the Rhine, for its internal decorations, its wealth, and its hospitality. The chapel was justly deemed a rare specimen of monastic taste, nor was it wanting in most of those ornaments and decorations, that render the superior buildings, devoted to the service of the Church of Rome, so imposing to the senses, and so pleasing to the admirers of solemn effect. The building was vast, and, as prevailed throughout that region and in the century of which we write, sombre. It had numerous altars, rich in marbles and pictures, each celebrated in the Palatinate for the kind mediation of the particular saint to whom it was dedicated, and each loaded with the votive offerings of the suppliant, or of the grateful. The walls and the nave were painted *al fresco*, not indeed with the pencil of Raphael, or Buonorotti, but creditably, and in a manner to heighten the beauty of the place. The choir was carved in high relief, after a fashion much esteemed, and that was admirably executed in the middle states of Europe, no less than in Italy, and whole flocks of cherubs were seen poising on the wing around the organ, the altar, and the tombs.

The latter were numerous, and indicated, by their magnificence, that the bodies of those who had enjoyed the world's advantages, slept within the hallowed precincts.

At length a door, communicating with the cloisters, opened, and the monks appeared, walking in procession. At their head came the Abbot, wearing his mitre, and adorned with the gorgeous robes of his ecclesiastical office. Two priests, decorated for the duties of the altar, followed, and then succeeded the professed and the assistants, in pairs. The whole procession swept through the aisles, in stately silence; and, after making the tour of most of the church, paying homage and offering prayers at several of the most honored altars, it passed into the choir. Father Bonifacius was seated on his episcopal throne, and the rest of the brotherhood occupied the glossy stalls reserved for such occasions. During the march of the monks, the organ breathed a low accompaniment, and, as they became stationary, its last strain died in the vaulted roof. At this moment the clattering of horses' hoofs was audible without, causing the startled and uneasy priests to suspend the mass. The rattling of steel came next, and then the heavy tread of armed heels was heard on the pavement of the church itself.

Emich of Hartenburg came up the principal aisle, with the steady front of one confident of his power, and claiming deference. He was accompanied by his guests, the Knight of Rhodes and Monsieur Latouche, while young Berchthold Hintermayer kept at his elbow, like one accustomed to be in close attendance. A small train of unarmed dependants brought up the rear. There was a seat of honor, in the choir itself, and near the master altar, to which it was usual to admit princes and nobles of high consideration. Passing through the crowd,

that had collected at the railing of the choir, the Count inclined towards one of the lateral aisles, and was soon face to face with the Abbot. The latter arose, and slightly recognized the presence of his guest, while the whole brotherhood imitated his example, though with greater respect; for, as we have said, it was usual to pay this homage to worldly rank, even in the temple. Emich seated himself, with a scowl on his visage, while his two noble associates found seats of honor near. Berchthold stood at hand.

An inexperienced eye could have detected no outward signs of his recent defeat, in the exterior of Wilhelm of Venloo. His muscles had already regained their tone, and his entire countenance its usual expression of severe authority, a quality for which it was more remarkable than for any lines of mortification or of thought. He glanced at the victor, and then, by a secret sign, communicated with a lay brother. At this moment the mass commenced.

Of all the nations of Christendom, this, compared with its numbers, is the least connected with the Church of Rome. The peculiar religious origin of the people, their habits of examination and mental independence, and their prejudices (for the Protestant is no more free from this failing than the Catholic,) are likely to keep them long separated from any policy, whether of church or state, that exacts faith without investigation, or obedience without the right to remonstrate. An opinion is sedulously disseminated in the other hemisphere, that busy agents are rapidly working changes in this respect, and a powerful party is anxiously anticipating great ecclesiastical and political results from the return of the American nation to the opinions of their ancestors of the middle ages. Were the fact so, it would give us little concern, for we do not believe sal-

vation to be the peculiar province of sects; but, had we any apprehensions of the consequences of such a conversion, they would not be excited by the accidental accumulations of emigrants in towns, or on the public works in which the country is so actively engaged. We believe that where one native Protestant becomes a Catholic in America, ten emigrant Catholics drop quietly into the ranks of the prevailing sects; and, without at all agitating the point of which is the gainer or the loser by the change, we shall proceed to describe the manner of the mass, as a ceremony, that ninety-nine in a hundred of our readers have never had, nor probably ever will have, an opportunity of witnessing.

There is no appeal to the feelings of man, which has given rise to opinions so decidedly at variance as those which are entertained of the Roman ritual. To one description of Christians, these ceremonies appear to be vain mummeries, invented to delude, and practised for unjustifiable ends; while, to another, they contain all that is sublime and imposing in human worship. As is usual in most cases of extreme opinions, the truth would seem to lie between the two. The most zealous Catholic errs when he would maintain the infallibility of all who minister at the altar, or when he overlooks the slovenly and irreverent manner in which the most holy offices are so frequently performed; and, surely, the Protestant who quits the temple, in which justice has been done to the formula of this church, without perceiving that there is deep and sublime devotion in its rites, has steeled his feelings against the admission of every sentiment in favor of a sect that he is willing to proscribe. We belong to neither class, and shall, therefore, endeavor to represent things as they have been seen, not disguising or affecting a single emotion because our fathers

happened to take refuge in this western world, to set up altars of a different shade of faith.

The interior of the Abbey-church of Limburg, as has just been stated, was renowned in Germany for its magnificence. Its vaulted roof was supported by many massive pillars, and ornamented with scriptural stories, by the best pencils of that region. The grand altar was of marble, richly embellished with agate, containing as usual a labored representation of the blessed Mary and her deified child. A railing of exquisite workmanship and richly gilded, excluded profane feet from this sanctified spot, which, in addition to its fixtures, was now glittering with vessels of gold and precious stones, being decorated for the approaching mass. The officiating priests wore vestments stiffened with golden embroidery, while the inferior attendants were as usual clad in white, and bound with scarfs of purple.

Upon this scene of gorgeous and elaborate splendor, in which the noble architecture united with the minute preparations of the service, to lead the spirit to lofty contemplations, the chant of the monks, and the tones of the organ, broke in a deep and startling appeal to the soul. Lives dedicated to the practices of their community, had drilled the brotherhood into perfection, and scarce a note issued among the vaults that was not attuned to the desired effect. Trombones, serpents, and viols, lent their aid to increase the solemn melody of powerful masculine voices, which were so blended with the wind instrument as to comprise but one deep, grand, and grave sound of praise. Count Emich turned on his seat, clenching the handle of his sword, as if the clamor of the trumpet were in his ears: then his unquiet glance met that of the Abbot, and his chin fell upon a hand. As the service proceeded, the zeal of the brotherhood seemed to increase, and, as it was afterwards remarked, on no occasion had

the mass of Limburg, at all times known for its power in music, been so remarkable for its strong and stirring influence. Voice rolled above voice, in a manner that must be heard to be understood, and there were moments when the tones of the instruments, full and united as they were, appeared drowned in the blending of a hundred human aspirations. From the deepest of one of these solemn peals there arose a strain, at whose first tone all other music was hushed. It was a single human voice, of that admixture of the male and female tones which seems nearest allied to the supernatural, being in truth, a contr'alto of great compass, roundness, and sweetness. Count Emich started, for, when these heavenly strains broke upon his ear, they seemed to float in the vault above the choir; nor could he, as the singer was concealed, assure himself of the delusion, while the solo lasted. He dropped his sword, and gazed about him, for the first time that morning, with an expression of human charity. The lips of young Berchthold parted in admiration, and as he just then met the blue eye of Meta, there was an exchange of gentle feeling in that quiet and secret glance. In the mean time, the chant proceeded. The single unearthly voice that had so stirred the spirits of the listeners ceased, and a full chorus of the choir concluded the hymn.

The Count of Leiningen drew a breath so heavy, that it was audible to Bonifacius. The latter suffered his countenance to unbend, and, as in the case of the youthful pair, the spirit of concord appeared to soothe the tempers of these fierce rivals. But here commenced the ritual of the mass. The rapid utterance of the officiating priest, gesticulations which lost their significance by being blended and indistinct, and prayers in a tongue that defeated their object, by involving instead of rendering the

medium of thought noble and clear, united to weaken the effect produced by the music. Worship lost its character of inspiration, by assuming that of business, neither attracting the imagination, influencing the feelings, nor yet sufficiently convincing the reason. Abandoning all these persuasive means, too much was left to the convictions of a naked and settled belief.

Emich of Hartenburg gradually resumed his repulsive mien, and the effect of all that he had so lately felt was lost in cold indifference to words that he did not comprehend. Even young Berchthold sought the eye of Meta less anxiously, and both the Knight of Rhodes and Monsieur Latouche gazed listlessly towards the throng grouped before the railing of the choir. In this manner did the service commence and terminate. There was another hymn, and a second exhibition of the power of music, though with an effect less marked than that which had been produced when the listeners were taken by surprise.

Against a column, near the centre of the church, was erected a pulpit. A monk rose from his stall, at the close of the worship, and, passing through the crowd, ascended its stairs like one about to preach. It was Father Johan, a brother known for the devotedness of his faith and the severity of his opinions. The low receding forehead, the quiet but glassy eye, and the fixedness of the inferior members of the face, might readily have persuaded a physiognomist that he beheld a heavy enthusiast. The language and opinions of the preacher did not deny the expectations excited by his exterior. He painted, in strong and ominous language, the dangers of the sinner, narrowed the fold of the saved within metaphysical and questionable limits, and made frequent appeals to the fears and to the less noble passions of his audience. While the greater number in the

church kept aloof, listening indifferently, or gazing at the monuments and other rich decorations of the place, a knot of kindred spirits clustered around the pillar that supported the preacher's desk, deeply sympathizing in all his pictures of pain and desolation.

The sharp, angry, and denunciatory address of Father Johan was soon ended; and, as he re-entered the choir, the Abbot arose and retired to the cloisters, followed by most of the brotherhood. But neither the Count of Hartenburg, nor any of his train, seemed disposed to quit the church so soon. An air of expectation appeared, also, to detain most of those in the body of the building. A monk, towards whom many longing eyes had been cast, yielded to the general and touching appeal, and quitting his stall, one of high honor, he took the place just vacated by Father Johan.

This movement was no sooner made, than the name of Father Arnolph, the Prior, or the immediate spiritual governor of the community, was buzzed among the people. Emich arose, and, accompanied by his friends, took a station near the pulpit, while the dense mass of uplifted and interested faces, that filled the middle aisle, proclaimed the interest of the congregation. There was that in the countenance and air of Father Arnolph to justify this plain demonstration of sympathy. His eye was mild and benevolent, his forehead full, placid, and even, and the whole character of his face was that of winning philanthropy. To the influence of this general and benevolent expression, must be added evident signs of discipline, much thought, and meek hope.

The spiritual part of such a man was not likely to belie the exterior. His doctrine, like that of the divine being he served, was charitable and full of love. Though he spoke of the terrors of judg-

ment, it was with grief rather than with menace: and it was when dwelling on the persuasive and attractive character of faith, that he was most earnest and eloquent. Again Emich found his secret intentions shaken, and his frown relaxed to gleamings of sympathy and interest. The eye of the preacher met that of the stern baron, and, without making an alarming change of manner, he continued, as it were, by a natural course of thought—"Such is the church in its purity, my hearers, let the errors, the passions, or the designs of man pervert it in what manner they may. The faith I preach is of God, and it partakes of the godlike qualities of his divine essence. He who would impute the sins of its mistaken performance to aught but his erring creatures, casts odium on that which is instituted for his own good; and he who would do violence to its altars, lifts a hand against a work of omnipotence!"

With these words in his ears, Emich of Hartenburg turned away, and passed musingly up the church.



CHAPTER IX.

"Japhet, I cannot answer thee."
BYRON.

THE Abbey of Limburg owed its existence and its rich endowments chiefly to the favor of an emperor of Germany. In honor of this great patron, an especial altar, and a gorgeous and elaborate tomb, had been erected. Similar honors had been also paid to the Counts of Leiningen, and to certain other noble families of the vicinity. These several altars were in black marble, relieved by ornaments

of white, and the tombs were decorated with such heraldic devices as marked the particular races of the different individuals. They stood apart from those already described in the principal church, in a sort of crypt, or semi-subterranean chapel, beneath the choir. Thither Count Emich held his way, when he quitted the column against which he had leaned, while listening to the sermon of Father Arnolph.

The light of the upper church had that soft and melancholy tint, which is so peculiar and so ornamental to a Gothic edifice. It entered through high, narrow windows of painted glass, coloring all within with a hue that it was not difficult for the imagination to conceive had some secret connexion with the holy character of the place. The depth and the secluded position of the chapel rendered this light still more gloomy and touching in the crypt. When the Count reached the pavement, he felt its influence deeply, for few descended into that solemn and hallowed vault without becoming sensible to the religious awe that reigned around. Emich crossed himself, and, as he passed before the altar reared by his race, he bent a knee to the mild and lovely female countenance that was there to represent the Mother of Christ. He thought himself alone, and he uttered a prayer; for, though Emich of Leiningen was a man that rarely communed seriously with God, when exposed to worldly and deriding eyes, he had in his heart deep reverence for his power. As he arose, a movement at his elbow attracted a look aside.

"Ha!—Thou here, Herr Prior!" he exclaimed, suppressing as much of his surprise as self-command enabled him to do with success; "Thou art swift in thy passage from the stall to the pulpit, and swifter from the pulpit to the chapel!"

"We that are vowed to lives of monkish devo-

tion, need to be often at all. Thou wert kneeling, Emich, before the altar of thy race?"

"By St. Benedict, thy patron! but thou hast, in good sooth, found me in some such act, holy father. A weakness came over me, on entering into this gloomy place, and I would fain do reverence to the spirits of those who have gone before me."

"Callest thou the desire to pray a weakness? At what shrine could one of thy name worship more fittingly than at this, which has been reared and enriched by the devout of his own kindred; or in what better mood canst thou look into thyself, and call upon divine aid, than in that thou hast mentioned?"

"Herr Prior, thou overlookest the occasion of my visit, which is to hear the Abbey mass, and not to confess and be shrived."

"It is long since thou hast had the benefit of these sacred offices, Emich!"

"Thou hast done well in thy way, father, at the desk; and I question not that the burghers of Deurckheim and their gossips will do thee credit in their private discourses. Thy fame as a preacher is not of mean degree even now, and this effort of to-day would well-nigh gain thee a bishopric, were the women of our valley in the way of moving Rome. How fareth it with the most holy Abbot this morning, and with those two pillars of the community, the Fathers Siegfried and Cuno?"

"Thou sawest them in their places at the most holy mass."

"'Fore heaven! but they are worthy companions! Believe me, father, more honest boon associates do not dwell in our merry Palatinate, nor men that I love in a better fashion, according to their merits! Did'st hear, reverend Prior, of their visit to Hartenburg, and of their deeds in the flesh?"

"The humor of thy mind is quickly changed,

Herr Count, and pity 'tis 'twere thus. I came not here to listen to tales of excesses in thy hold, nor of any forgetfulness of those, who having sworn to better things, have betrayed that they are merely men.

"Ay, and stout men, if any such dwell in the empire! I prize my good name as another, or I would tell thee the number of vessels that my keeper of the cellar sweareth are no better than so many men-at-arms fallen in a rally or an onset."

"This love of wine is the curse of our region and of the times. I would that none of the treacherous liquor should again enter the gates of Limburg!"

"God's justice! reverend Prior, thou wilt in sooth find some decrease of quantity in future," returned Emich, laughing, "for the disputed vineyards have at last found a single, and, though it might better come from thee, as one that hath often looked into my interior, as it were, by confession, a worthy master. I pledge thee the honor of a noble, that not a flask of that which thou so contemnest shall ever again do violence to thy taste."

The Count cast a triumphant glance at the monk, in the expectation, and possibly in the hope, that, notwithstanding his professions of moderation, some lurking signs of regret might betray themselves at this announcement of the convent's loss. But Father Arnolph was what he seemed, a man devoted to the holy office he had assumed, and one but little influenced by worldly interests.

"I understand thee, Emich," he said mildly, but unmoved. "This scandal was not wanting at such a moment, to bring obloquy upon a reverend and holy church, against which its enemies have been permitted to make rude warfare, for reasons that are concealed in the inscrutable mysteries of him who founded it."

"Thou speakest in reason, monk, for, to say truth,

yon fellow of Saxony, and his followers, who are any thing but few or weak, begin to move many in this quarter to doubts and disobedience. Thou must most stoutly hate this brother Luther in thy heart, father !"

For the first time that day, the countenance of the Prior lost its even expression of benevolence. But the change was so imperceptible to a vulgar eye, as to escape the scrutiny of the Count; and the feeling, a lingering remnant of humanity, was quickly mastered by one so accustomed to hold the passions in subjection.

"The name of the schismatic hath troubled me !" returned the Prior, smiling mournfully at the consciousness of his own weakness; "I hope it has not been with a feeling of personal dislike. He stands on a frightful precipice, and from my soul do I pray, that not only he, but all the deluded that follow in his dangerous track, may see their peril in time to retire unharmed !"

"Father, thou speakest like one that wishest good to the Saxon rather than harm !"

"I think I may say, the words do not belie the thoughts."

"Nay, thou forgettest the damnable heresies he practiseth, and overlooketh his motive ! Surely one that can thus sell soul and body for love of a wanton nun, hath little claim to thy charity !"

There was a slight glow on the temples of Father Arnolph.

"They have attributed to him this craven passion," he answered, "and they have tried to prove, that a mean wish to partake of the pleasures of the world, lies at the bottom of his rebellion; but I believe it not, and I say it not."

"God's truth ! thou art worthy of thy holy office, Herr Prior, and I honor thy moderation. Were there more like thee among us, we should have a better

neighborhood, and less meddling with the concerns of others. With thee, I see myself no such necessity of his openly wiving the nun, for it is very possible to enjoy the gifts of life even under a cowl, should it be our fortune to wear it."

The monk made no answer, for he perceived he had to do with one unequal to understanding his own character.

"Of this we will say no more," he rejoined, after a brief and painful pause; "let us look rather to thine own welfare. It is said, Count Emich, that thou meditatest evil to this holy shrine; that ambition, and the longings of cupidity, have tempted thee to plot our abbey's fall, in order that none may stand between thine own baronial power and the throne of the Elector!"

"Thou art less unwilling to form unkind opinions of thy nearest neighbor, than of that mortal enemy of the Church, Luther, it would appear, Herr Prior. What hast thou seen in me, that can embolden one of thy charity to hazard this accusation?"

"I do but hazard what all in our convent think and dread. Hast thou reflected well, Emich, of this sacrilegious enterprise, and of what may be its fruits? Dost thou recall the objects for which these holy altars were reared, or the hand that laid the corner-stone of the edifice thou wouldst so profanely overthrow?"

"Look you, good Father Arnolph, there are two manners of viewing the erection of thy convent, and more especially of this identical church in which we stand. One of our traditions sayeth that the arch-knave himself had his trowel in thy masonry."

"Thou art of too high lineage, of blood too noble, and of intelligence too ripe, to credit the tale."

"These are points in which I pretend not to dip too deeply. I am no scholar of Prague or Witten-

berg, that thou shouldst put these questions so closely to me. It were well that the brotherhood had bethought itself of this imputation in season, that the question might have been settled, for or against, as justice needed, when the learned and great among our fathers were met at Constance, in grave and general council."

Father Arnolph regarded his companion in serious concern. He too well knew the deplorable ignorance, and the consequent superstition, in which even the great of his time were involved, to manifest surprise; but he also knew the power the other wielded sufficiently to foresee the evils of such a union between force and ignorance. Still it was not his present object to combat opinions that were only to be removed by time and study, if indeed they can ever be eradicated, when fairly rooted in the human mind. He pursued his immediate design, therefore, avoiding a discussion, which, at that moment, might prove worse than useless.

"That the finger of evil mingles more or less with all things that come of human agency, may be true," he continued, taking care that the expression of his eye should neither awaken the pride, nor arouse the obstinacy of the noble—"but when altars have been reared, and when the worship of the Most High God hath continued for ages, we have reason to hope that his holy spirit presideth in majesty and love around the shrines. Such hath been the case with Limburg, Count Emich: and doubt it not, we who stand here, holding this discourse, stand also in the immediate presence of that dread Being who created heaven and earth, who guideth our lives, and who will judge us in death!"

"God help us, Herr Prior! Thou hast already done thy office in the desk this day, and I see no occasion that thou shouldst doubly perform a function, that was so well acquitted at first. I like not

the manner of being ushered, as it were unannounced, into so dread a presence as this thou hast just proclaimed. Were it but the Elector Friedrich, Emich of Leiningen could not presume to this familiarity, without some consultation as to its fitness."

"In the eyes of the Being we mean, Electors and Emperors are equally indifferent. He loveth the meek, and the merciful, and the just, while he scourgeth them that deny his authority. But thou hast named thy feudal prince, and I will question thee in a manner suited to thy habits. Thou art, in truth, Emich of Leiningen, a noble of name in the Palatinate, and one known to be of long-established authority in these regions. Still art thou second, or even third, in worldly command, in this thy very country. The Elector and the Emperor both hold thee in check, and either is strong enough to destroy thee at pleasure, in thy vaunted hold of Hartenburg."

"To the last I yield the means, if thou wilt, worthy Prior"—interrupted the Count—"but for the first, he must needs dispose of his own pressing enemies, before he achieves this victory!"

Father Arnolph understood the other's meaning, for it was no secret that Friedrich was, just then, so pressed as to sit on a tottering throne; a circumstance that was known to have encouraged the long meditated designs of the Count of Hartenburg to get rid of a community, that thwarted his views, and diminished his local authority.

"Forgetting the Elector, we will turn only to the Emperor, then," rejoined the Prior. "Thou believest him to be in his palace, and remote from thy country, and certainly he hath here no visible force to restrain thy rebellious hand. We will imagine that a family he protected—nay, that he loved—stood in the way of some of thy greedy projects, and that the tempter had persuaded thee it would be well

to remove it, or to destroy with the strong hand. Art thou weak enough, Count Emich, to listen to such advice, when thou knowest that the arm of Charles is long enough to reach from his distant Madrid to the most remote corner of Germany, and that his vengeance would be as sure as it would be fearful ?"

"It would be a bold warfare, Herr Prior, that of Emich of Leiningen against Charles Quintus! Left to mine own humor, holy monk, I would rather choose another enemy."

"And yet thou wouldst war with one mightier than he! Thou raisest thy impotent arm, and thy audacious will, against thy God! Thou wouldst despise his promises, profane his altars, nay, thou wouldst fain throw down the tabernacle that he hath reared! Dost thou think that omnipotence will be a nerveless witness of this sin; or that an eternal and benign wisdom will forget to punish ?"

"By St. Paul! thou puttest the matter altogether in thine own interest, Father Arnolph, for there is yet no proof that this Abbey of Limburg hath any such origin, or, if it had, that it hath not fallen into disfavor, by the excesses of its own professed. 'Twere well to send for the right reverend Abbot, and those pillars of sanctity the Fathers Cuno and Siegfried, to bear witness in thy behalf. God's wisdom! I reason better with those worthies, in such a matter, than with thee!"

Emich laughed, the sound echoing in that vaulted chapel to the ears of the monk, like the scoffing of a demon. Still, the natural equity of Father Arnolph told him that there was too much to justify the taunt of the noble, for he had long and bitterly mourned the depravity of many of the brotherhood.

"I am not here to sit in judgment on those who err, but to defend the shrines at which I worship, and to warn thee from a fatal sin. If thy hand is

ever lifted against these walls, it is raised against that which God hath blessed, and which God will avenge. But thou art of human feeling, Emich of Hartenburg; and though, doubting of the sacred character of that which thou wouldst fain destroy, thou canst not deceive thyself concerning these tombs—In this holy chapel have prayers been often raised, and masses said, for the souls of thine own line!"

The Count of Leiningen looked steadily at the speaker. Father Arnolph had placed himself, without design, near the opening which communicated between that sombre chapel and the superior church. Rays of bright light shot through the eastern window, and fell upon the pavement at his feet, throwing around his form the mild and solemn lustre which comes from the stained glass of the Gothic ages. The services of the morning had also spread, throughout the entire building, that soothing atmosphere which is usually the attendant of Roman worship. The incense had penetrated to the crypt, and unconsciously the warlike noble had felt its influence quieting his nerves and lulling the passions. All who have entered the principal Basilica of modern Rome, have been subject to a combination of moral and physical causes that produce the result we mean, and which, though more striking in that vast and glorious pile, resembling a world with attributes and an atmosphere of its own, is also felt in every Catholic temple of consequence in a lessened degree.

"Here lie my fathers, Arnolph," answered the Count, huskily; "and here, as thou sayest, have masses been said for their souls!"

"And thou contemnest their graves—thou wouldst violate even their bones!"

"'Twere not an act for a Christian!"

"Look hither, Count. This is the monument of

the good Emich, thy ancestor. He honored his God, and did not scruple to worship at our altars."

"Thou knowest, holy Prior, that I have often bared my soul at thy knees."

"Thou hast confessed, and hast been shrived; that thou didst not lay up future griefs——"

"Say rather damnation"—interrupted one behind, whose voice, issuing suddenly from that sepulchral chapel, seemed to come from the tombs themselves—"Thou triflest, reverend Prior, with our holy mission, to deal thus tenderly with so sore a sinner."

The Count of Leiningen had started, and even quailed, at the first words of interruption; but looking around, he beheld the receding front, the sunken eye, and the bending person of Father Johan."

"Monks, I leave you," said Emich, firmly. "It is good for ye to pray, and to frequent these gloomy altars; but I, who am a soldier, cannot waste further time in your vaults. Herr Prior, farewell. Thou hast a guardian that will protect the good."

Before the Prior could recover his voice, for he too had been taken by surprise, the Count stalked, with a heavy footstep, up the marble stairs, and the tread of his armed heel was soon heard on the flags above.

CHAPTER X.

"The way is but short; away—"
Armado.

While all must be conscious of the fearful infirmities that beset human nature, there are none so base as not to know that their being contains the seeds of that godlike principle which still likens them to their divine Creator. Virtue commands the respect of man, in whatever accidental stage of civilization, or of mental improvement, he may happen to exist; and he who practises its precepts is certain of the respect, though he may not always secure the protection, of his contemporaries.

As the Count of Leiningen walked down the rich and vast aisle of the Abbey-church, his thoughts vacillated between the impressions produced by the Prior, and his latent, but still predominant, intentions. He might have been likened to one who listened to the councils of a good and of an evil genius; that exhorting to forbearance and mercy, and this tempting to violence by the usual array of flattery and hopes. While he brooded over the exactions of the community, which were founded on a legal superiority that was alike hurtful to his power and galling to his pride, its manner of thwarting his views, and its constant opposition to his supremacy in the valley, motives of enmity that were justly heightened by the dissolute and audacious deportment of too many of its members, the effect of all was secretly opposed by the image of Father Arnolph, surrounded by the mild and noble characteristics of Christian virtue. Emich could not, though he fain would, chase from his imagination the impression of meekness, charity, and of self-denial, that a long acquaintance with the monk had

made, and which the recent interview had served both to freshen and to render more deep. But a spectacle was prepared to meet his eyes in the court of the convent, that did as much towards weakening this happy influence of the Prior, by setting the pride of the noble in opposition to his better feelings, as could have been wished by the bitterest enemy of Limburg.

It has been said that the outer wall of the Abbey encircled the entire brow of the hill, or mountain, on which the convent stood. Though the buildings were spacious and numerous, the size of the little plain on the summit left ample space for exercise and air. Besides the cloisters, which were vast, though possessing the character of monkish seclusion, there were gardens in the rear of the Abbot's abode, and a court of considerable extent, immediately in front of the church. Athwart this court, in which sundry groups of the late congregation yet lingered, was drawn up, in military order, a band of soldiers, wearing the colors, and acknowledging the authority, of the Elector Friedrich. The secret signal given by Father Bonifacius, when the Count entered the choir, had prepared this unwelcome sight for his neighbor.

While the men-at-arms leaned on their arquebuses, in grave attention to discipline, the Knight of Rhodes and the Abbé were occupied in paying their court to the fair wife of the Burgomaster of Deurckheim, and to her scarce fairer daughter. Young Berchthold stood aloof; watching the interview with feelings allied equally to envy and jealousy.

"A fair morning and a comfortable mass to you, high-born Emich!" cried the husband and father heartily, but lifting his cap, as the noble approached the spot where the burgher stood, waiting for this meeting ere he put foot into the stirrup; "I had

thought the sight of your fathers' altar was like to cheat me of this honor, and to send me away without a word from your friendly and much-prized grace."

"Between thee and me, Heinrich, this slight could not happen," answered the Count, grasping the hand of the Burgomaster, which he squeezed with the cordiality and vigor of a soldier. "How fareth it with all in Deurckheim, that town of my affection, not to say of my right?"

"As you could wish, noble Count, and well-disposed to the house of Leiningen. In all that pertaineth to love of your name and race, we lack nothing."

"This is well, honest Heinrich; it may yet be better—But thou wilt do me grace this summer morning?"

"Nay, it is for your grace to command in this particular, and for one like me to obey."

"Herr Heinrich, hast looked well at these knaves of Friedrich? Ha! are they not melancholy and ill-disposed at being cooped with Benedictines, when there are stirring times in the Palatinate, and when their master hath as much as he can do to hold his court in Heidelberg! Seest thou aught of this?"

Emich had dropped his voice, and the burgher was not a man to express more in answer, than the circumstances actually required. He looked eloquently, however, and the exchange of glances between him and the Count betrayed the nature of the understanding that connected the castle and the city.

"You spoke of commanding my duty, mein Herr Graf, and it is fitting I should know in what manner to do you pleasure."

"Nay, 'tis no pain-giving penance I ask. Turn thy horse's head towards Hartenburg, and share of

my poor fare, with a loving welcome, for an hour or so."

"I would it were within compass, my Lord Count," returned Heinrich, casting a doubting look towards Meta and his wife—"but these Sunday masses are matters in which the women love to deal; and from the first sound of the matin bell, till we shut the gates at even, I scarce call myself master of a thought."

"By the Virgin! 'Twould seem ill indeed, did not Hartenburg contain a roof to shelter all of thy name and love."

"There are noble gentlemen already on your hospitality, and I would not fain——"

"Name them not. This in the gay doublet, that weareth the white cross, is but a houseless Knight of Rhodes, one that wandereth like the dove from the ark, uncertain where to place his foot; and he of black vestments, an idle Abbé from among the French, who doth little else but prate with the women. Leave thy female gender in their hands, for they are much accustomed to these gallantries."

"Zum Henker! most nobly born eccellenz, I never doubted their handiness in all idlenesses; but my wife hath little humor for vain attentions of this nature, and not to conceal from my lord any of our humors, I will confess it is as little to my pleasure to witness so much ceremony with a woman. Were the well-born Ermengarde, your noble consort, in the castle, my female charge might be glad to pay their court to her, but in her absence I doubt that they will cause more encumbrance than they will afford satisfaction."

"Name it not, honest Heinrich, but leave the matter to me. As for these idlers, I will find them occupation, when fairly out of the saddle; so will I not excuse the youngest of thy name."

The warm, frank manner of the noble prevailed,

though the arrangement was not altogether agreeable to the Burgomaster; but in that age hospitality was always of so direct a character as seldom to admit denial without sufficient excuse. Emich now paid his court to the females. Smoothing his moustache and beard, he saluted the cheeks of Ulricke, with affectionate freedom, and then, presuming on his years and rank, he pressed a kiss on the ruby lips of Meta. The girl blushed and laughed, and in her confusion curtesied, as if in acknowledgment of the grace from one of so high quality. Heinrich himself, though he so little liked the coquetry of the strangers, witnessed these liberties not only without alarm but with evident contentment.

"Many thanks, noble Emich, for this honor to my women," he cried, lifting his bonnet again. "Meta is not used to these compliments, and she scarce knoweth rightly how to acknowledge the grace, for, to say truth, it is not often that her cheek feeleth the tickling of a beard. I am no saluter of her sex, and there are none in Deurckheim that may so presume."

"St. Denis defend me!" exclaimed the Abbé; "in what shameful negligence have we fallen!" saluting the mild Ulricke on the instant, and repeating the same ceremony with the daughter, so suddenly, as to leave none present time to recover from their surprise. "Sir Knight of Rhodes, we appear in this affair as but of indifferent breeding!"

"Hold, cousin of Viederbach," said Emich, laughing, while he placed a hand before his kinsman—"We forget, all this time, that we are in the court of Limburg, and that salutations which savor so much of earth may scandalize the holy Benedictines. We will to horse, and keep our gallantries for a better season."

The forward, impatient movement of young Berchthold was self-checked, and, swallowing his discontent, he turned aside to conceal his vexation.

In the mean time, the whole party prepared to mount. Although repulsed in his effort to obtain a salute from the fair girl, who had so passively received these liberties from his kinsman and the Abbé, the Knight of Rhodes busied himself in assisting the damsel upon the crupper of her father's saddle. A similar office was performed for Ulricke by the Count of Leiningen himself, and then the noble threw his own booted and heavy leg across the large and strong-jointed war-horse that was pawing the pavement of the court. The others imitated his example, even to the mounted servitors, who were numerous; when, doing stately reverence to the large crucifix that stood before them, the whole cavalcade ambled from the court.

There were many curious spectators around the outer gate, among whom were sundry of the more humble dependants of Hartenburg, purposely collected there, by an order of their lord, in the event of any sudden violence arising from his visit to the Abbey, together with a crowd of mendicants.

"Alms, great Emich! Alms, worthy and wealthy Burgomaster! God's blessing on ye both, and holy St. Benedict heed ye in his prayers! We are a-hungred and a-cold, and we crave alms at your honorable hands!"

"Give the rogues a silver pence," said the Count to the purse-bearer, who rode in his train—"They have a starving look, in sooth. These godly Benedictines have, of late, been so busied between their garrison and their masses, that they have forgotten to feed their poor. Come nearer, friend; art of the Jaegerthal?"

"No, noble Count. I come from a pilgrimage to a distant shrine, but want and suffering have befallen me by the way."

"Hast pressed the monks for charity? or dost

thou find them too much engaged in godliness to remember human suffering?"

"Great Count, they give freely; but where there are many mouths to feed, there needs be much gold. I say naught against the holy community of Limburg, which is godly in charity, as in grace."

"Give the knave a kreutzer;" growled Heinrich Frey; "hast thou aught to show in the way of authority for undertaking this pilgrimage, and for assailing the Elector's subjects and servitors in a public horse-path?"

"Naught but this, illustrious Burgomaster,"—Heinrich wore his chain of office—"naught but the commands of my confessor, and this pass of our own chief men."

"Callest this naught? Thou speakest of a legal instrument of high quality, an' it were but a copy of silly rhymes! Hold! thou must not be led into temptation by too much want. Meta, wench, hast a kreutzer?"

"Here is a silver pence, that may better suit the pilgrim's necessities, father."

"God keep thee, child! Dost expect to escape want thyself, with such prodigality? But stay—there are many of them, and the piece justly distributed might do good. Come nearer, friends. Here is a silver zwanziger, which you will divide honestly into twenty parts, of which two are for the stranger, for to him are we most indebted by the commands of God, and one for each inhabitant of the valley, not forgetting the poor woman that, in your haste, and by reason of her years, you have prevented from drawing near. For this boon, I ask prayers of you in behalf of the Elector, the city of Deurckheim, and the family of Frey."

So saying, the Burgomaster pushed ahead, and was soon at the foot of the mountain of Limburg. The train of footmen, who had lingered to witness

the largess of the magistrate, and who had considered the indifference of Emich as what was no more than natural in one, placed by Providence in a situation so far removed from vulgar wants, was about to follow, when a lay-brother of the convent touched one of the party on the arm, signing for him to re-enter the court.

"Thou art needed further, friend," whispered the lay-brother. "Amuse thyself with these men-at-arms till they retire; then seek the cloisters."

A nod sufficed to tell the lay-brother that he was understood, and he immediately disappeared. The follower of Count Emich did as commanded, loitering in the court until the object of the Abbot was accomplished, that of exhibiting the protection of the Elector to his dangerous neighbor, and the arquebusiers marched to their quarters. The road was no sooner clear, than the peasant who had been detained proceeded to do as he had been ordered.

In each conventual edifice of the other hemisphere, there is an inner court surrounded by low and contemplative arcades, called the cloisters. The term, which is given to the seclusion of monastic life in general, and to the objects of the institution itself, in an architectural sense, is limited to the secluded and sombre piazzas just mentioned. When this part of the building is decorated, as often happens, with the elaborate ornaments of the Gothic style, it is not easy to conceive a situation more happily imagined for the purposes of reflection, self-examination, and religious calm. To us the cloisters have ever appeared pregnant with the poetry of monkish existence, and, Protestant as we are, we never yet entered one without feeling the influence of that holy and omnipotent power that is thought to be propitiated by conventual seclusion. In Italy, the land of vivid thought and of glorious realities, the pencils of the greatest masters have been put in

requisition to give the cloisters a mild attraction, blended with lessons of instruction, that are in strict consonance with their uses. Here are found some of the finest remains of Raphael, of Domenichino, and of Andrea del Sarto; and the traveller now enters vaulted galleries, that the monk so long paced in religious hope or learned abstraction, to visit the most prized relics of art.

The dependant of Count Emich had no difficulty in finding his way to the place in question, for, as usual, there was a direct communication between the cloisters of Limburg and the church. By entering the latter, and taking a lateral door, which was known to lead to the sacristy, he found himself beneath the arcades, in the midst of the touching seclusion described. Against the walls were tablets with Latin inscriptions, in honor of different brothers who had been distinguished by piety and knowledge; and here and there was visible, in ivory or stone, that constant monitor of Catholic worship, the crucifix.

The stranger paused, for a single monk paced the arcades, and his mien was not inviting for one who doubted of his reception. At least so thought the dependant of Emich, who might easily have mistaken the chastened expression of Father Arnolph's features, clouded as they now were with care, for severity.

"What wouldst thou?" demanded the Prior, when a turn brought him face to face with the intruder.

"Reverend monk, thy much-prized blessing."

"Kneel, and receive it, son. Thou art doubly blest; in seeking consolation from the Church, and in avoiding the fatal heresies of the times."

The Prior repeated the benediction, made the usual sign of grace, and motioned for the other to rise.

"Wouldst thou aught else?" he asked, observing

that the peasant did not retire, as was usual for those who received this favour.

"Naught—unless yonder brother hath occasion for me."

The face of Siegfried was thrust through a door which led to the cells. The countenance of the Prior changed like that of one who had lost all confidence in the intentions of his companion, and he pursued his way along the arcade. The other glided past, and disappeared by the door which he had been covertly invited to enter.

It has already been said that the Benedictine is an order of hospitality. A principal building of the hill was especially devoted to the comforts of the Abbot, and to those of the travellers it was always his duty, and in the case of Father Bonifacius scarcely less often his pleasure, to entertain. Here were seen some signs of the great wealth of the monastery, though it was wealth chastened by forms, and restricted by opinion; still there was little of self-denial, or indeed of any of that self-mortification which is commonly thought to be the inseparable attendant of the cell. The rooms were wainscoted with dark oak; emblems of religious faith, in costly materials, abounded; nor was there any want of velvet and other stuffs, all however of sober colours, though of intrinsic value. Father Siegfried ushered the peasant into one of the most comfortable of these rooms. It was the cabinet of the Abbot, who, having thrown aside the robes of office in which he had so lately appeared in the choir, and, ungirt and divested of all the churchly pomp in which he had just shown himself to the people, was now taking his ease, with the indolence of a student, and with some of the negligence of a debauchee.

"Here is the youth I have named to you, holy Abbot," said Father Siegfried, motioning his companion to advance.

Bonifacius laid down a parchment-covered and illuminated volume, one but lately issued from the press, rubbing his eyes like a man suddenly roused from a dreamy abstraction.

"Truly, brother Siegfried, these knaves of Leipzig have done wonders with their art! Not a word can I find astray, or a thought concealed. God knows to what pass of information this excess of knowledge, so long sacred to the learned, may yet lead us! The office of a librarian will no longer be of rare advantages, or scarcely of repute."

"Have we not proofs of the evil, in the growing infidelity, and in the manifest insubordination of the times?"

"It were better for all their souls, and their present repose, that fewer did the thinking in this troublesome world—Thou art named Johan, son?"

"Gottlob, most reverend Abbot, by your leave, and with the Church's favor."

"'Tis a pious appellation, and I trust thou dost not forget to obey the duty of which it should hourly remind thee."

"In that particular I can say that I praise God, father, for all the benefits I receive, and were they double what they are, I feel that within me which says I could go on rendering thanks for ever, for gracious gifts."

The answer of Gottlob caused the Abbot to turn his head. After studying the demure expression of the young man's face intently, he continued—

"This is well; thou art a huntsman in Count Emich's household?"

"His cow-herd, holy Abbot, and a huntsman in the bargain; for a more scampering, self-losing, trouble-giving family is not to be found in the Palatinate, than this of mine!"

"I remember it was a cow-herd; thou dealt a little lightly with my brother Siegfried here, in pre-

tending thou wert of Deurckheim, and not of the castle."

"To speak fairly to your reverence, there was some business between us; for be it known to you, holy Abbot, a cow-herd is made to suffer for all the frolics of his beasts, and so I preferred to do penance simply for my own backslidings, without white-washing the consciences of all Lord Emich's cattle in the bargain."

The Abbot turned again, and this time his look was still longer and more scrutinizing than before.

"Hast thou heard of Luther?"

"Does your reverence mean the drunken cobbler of Deurckheim."

"I mean the monk of Wittenberg, knave: though, by St. Benedict! thou hast not unaptly named the rebel; for truly doth he cobble that would fain mend the offices or discipline of Holy Church! I ask if thou hast sullied thy understanding and weakened thy faith, by lending ear to this damnable heresy, that is abroad in our Germany?"

"St. Benedict and the blessed Maria keep your reverence in mind, according to your deserts! What hath a poor cow-herd to do with questions that trouble the souls of the learned, and cause even the peaceably disposed to become quarrelsome and warlike?"

"Thou hast received a schooling above thy fortune—Art of the Jaegerthal?"

"Born and nurtured, holy Abbot. We are of long standing in the valley, and few families are better known for skill in rearing beeves, or for dealing cunningly with a herd, than that of which I come, humble and poor as I may seem to your reverence."

"I doubt but there is as much seeming as reality in this indifferent opinion of thyself. But thou hast had an explanation with brother Siegfried, and we count on thy services. Thou knowest the power of

the Church, son, and cannot be ignorant of its disposition to deal mercifully with those that do it homage, nor of its displeasure when justly angered. We are disposed to deal in increased kindness with those who do not stray from the fold, at this moment, when the Devils are abroad scattering the ignorant and helpless."

"Notwithstanding all you have said, most reverend Abbot, concerning the trifle I have gleaned in the way of education, I am too little taught to understand aught but plain speech. In the matter of a bargain it might be well to name the conditions clearly, lest a poor, but well-meaning, youth should happen to be damned, simply because he hath little knowledge of Latin, or cannot clearly understand what hath not been clearly said."

"I have no other meaning than that thy pious conduct will be remembered at the altar and the confessional; and that indulgences, and other lenities, will not be forgotten when there is question of thee."

"This is excellent, holy Abbot, for those that may profit by it—but, Saint Benedict help us! of what account would it all be, were Lord Emich to threaten his people with the dungeon and stripes, should any dare to frequent the altars of Limburg, or otherwise to have dealings with the reverend brotherhood?"

"Dost think our prayers, or our authority, cannot penetrate the walls of Hartenburg?"

"Of that, most powerful Bonifacius, I say nothing, since I never have yet profited in the way you mean. The dungeon of Hartenburg and I are not strangers to each other; and, were I to speak my most intimate thoughts, it would be to say, that Saint Benedict himself would find it no easy matter to open its doors, or to soften its pavements, so long as the Count was in an angry humour. Potz Tausend, holy Abbot! it is well to speak of miracles

and of indulgences; but let him who imagines that either is about to make that damp and soul-chilling hole warm and pleasant, pass a night within its walls in November! He may enter with as much faith in the Abbey prayers as he will; but if he do not come forth with great dread of Lord Emich's displeasure, why he is not flesh and blood, but a burning kiln in the form of mortality!"

Father Bonifacius saw that it was useless endeavoring to influence the mind of the cow-herd in the vulgar manner, and he had recourse to surer means. Motioning his companion to hand him a little casket, externally decorated with many of the visible signs of the Christian faith, he took out of it a purse, that wanted for neither size nor weight. The eyes of Gottlob glistened—had not the monks been much occupied in examining the gold, they might have suspected that the pleasure he betrayed was a little affected—and he manifested a strong disposition to know the contents of a bag that had so many outward signs of value.

"This will make peace and create faith between us," said the Abbot, handing a golden mark to Gottlob. "Here is that which the dullest comprehension can understand; and whose merits, I doubt not, will be sufficiently clear to one of thy ready wit."

"Your reverence does not overvalue my means," answered the cow-herd, who pocketed the piece without further ceremony. "Were our good Mother of the Church to take this method of securing friends, she might laugh at all the Luthers between the Lake of Constance and the ocean, him of Wittenberg among the number: but, by some strange oversight, she has of late done more towards taking away the people's gold, than towards bestowing! I am rejoiced to find that the mistake is at last discovered; and chiefly am I glad, that one, poor and unworthy

as I, has been among the first that she is pleased to make an instrument of her new intentions!"

The Abbot appeared at a loss to understand the character of his agent; but, being a worldly and selfish man himself, he counted rather loosely on the influence of a mediator whose potency is tacitly admitted by all of mercenary propensities. He resumed his seat, therefore, like one who saw little necessity for farther concealment, and went directly to the true object of the interview.

"Thou hast something to communicate from the Castle of Hartenburg, good Gottlob?"

"If it be your reverence's pleasure to listen."

"Proceed—Canst tell aught of the force Emich hath gathered in the hold?"

"Mein Herr Abbot, it is no easy matter to count varlets that go staggering about, from the moment the sun touches your Abbey towers, to that in which he sets behind the Teufelstein."

"Hast thou not means of separating them in divisions, and of making the enumerations of each apart?"

"Holy Abbot, that experiment hath failed. I divided them into the drunk and the sober; but, for the life of me, I could never get them all to be long enough of the same mind, to hunt up those that were in garrets and cellars; for while this slept off his debauch, that swallowed cup after cup, in a manner to recruit the drunkards as fast as they lost. It were far easier to know the Emperor's policy, than to count Lord Emich's followers!"

"Still they are many."

"They are and they are not, as one happens to view soldiership. In the way of draining a butt, Duke Friedrich would find them a powerful corps, even in an attack against his Heidelburg tun; and yet I doubt whether he would think them of much account in the pressing warfare he wageth."

"Go to—thou art too indirect in thy answers for the duty thou hast undertaken. Return the gold, if thou refusest the service."

"I pray thee, reverend Abbot, to remember the risks I have already run in this desperate undertaking, and to consider that the trifle you have so munificently bestowed, is already more than earned by the danger of my ears, to say nothing of great loss of reputation, and some pricking of conscience."

"This clown hath tampered with thee, Father Siegfried," said the Abbot, in a tone of reproach to the attending monk: "he even dares to make light of our presence and office!"

"We have the means of recalling him to his respect, as well as to a remembrance of his engagements."

"Thou sayest true: let the remedies be applied—but hold!"

During this brief colloquy between the Benedictines, Father Siegfried had touched a cord, and a lay-brother, of vigorous frame, showed himself. At a signal from the monk, he laid a hand on an arm of the unresisting Gottlob, and was about to lead him from the room, when the last words of the Abbot, and another signal from Father Siegfried, caused him to pause.

Bonifacius leaned a cheek on his hand, and mused long on the policy of the step he was about to take. The relations between the Abbey and the Castle, to adopt diplomatic language, were precisely in that awkward state in which it was almost as hazardous to recede as to advance. To imprison a vassal of the Count of Hartenburg, might bring matters to an immediate issue; and yet, to permit him to quit the convent, was to deprive the brotherhood of the means of extracting the information it was so important to obtain, and to procure which had been the principal inducement of attending the debauch

already described, at a moment when there was so little real amity between the revellers. The precaution of Emich had frustrated this well-laid scheme, and the result of the experiment had been too costly to admit of repetition. There was also hazard in permitting Gottlob to return to Hartenburg, for the expectations and hostile spirit of the Abbey had been so unadvisedly exposed to the hind, as to render it certain he would relate what had occurred. It was desirable, too, to maintain an appearance of confidence, although so little was felt; for the monk well knew, that next to friendship, its apparent existence was of account in preventing the usual expedients of open hostility. Agents were at Heidelburg, pressing the Elector on a point of the last concern to the welfare of the brotherhood; and it was particularly material that Emich should not be driven to any overt act before the result of this mission was known. In short, these too little powers were in a condition similar to that in which some greater communities have been known to exist, instinctively alive to the opposing character of their respective interests, and yet tampering with the denouement, because neither was yet prepared to proclaim all it wished, meditated, and hoped to be able to attain, In the mean time, there was an ostensible courtesy between the belligerent parties, occasionally obscured by bursts of natural feeling, which, in politics, the world calls bonhommie, but which would, perhaps, be better termed by the frank designation of artifice.

The Abbot was so much accustomed to this sort of politic reflection, that all these considerations passed before his mind in less time than we have consumed in enumerating them. Still the pause was salutary; for, when he resumed the discourse, he spoke like one whose decision was supported by thought.

"Thou wilt tarry with us a little, Gottlob, for the good of thy soul," he said, making a sign that was understood by his inferiors.

"A thousand thanks, humane and godly Abbot. Next to the present good of my body, I look with most concern to the future condition of my poor soul; and there is great comfort and consolation in your gracious words. It is but the soul of a poor man; but, being my all, in the way of souls, it must needs be taken care of."

"The discipline we meditate will be healthful. Brothers, lead the penitent to his cell."

The singular indifference with which Gottlob heard his doom, might have given the Abbot motive for reflection, had he not been so much occupied by other thoughts. As it was, the hind accompanied the lay brother without resistance, and indeed with the manner of one who appeared to think he was a gainer by this especial notice from the community of Limburg. So natural and easy was the air of Gottlob, as they took the direction of a gloomy corridor, that Father Siegfried began to believe he had employed an agent whose mind, shrewd and peculiar as it seemed at times, was in truth subject to moments of more than usual imbecility and dullness. He placed the cow-herd in a cell, pointed to a crucifix, its only article of furniture, and, without deeming it necessary even to secure the door, retired.

CHAPTER XI.

—————"The Lady Valeria is come
To visit you."

Coriolanus.

A short ride brought the cavalcade of Count Emich to the gates of Hartenburg. When all had alighted, and the guests, with the more regular inmates of the castle, were ushered into the hall, the lord of the hold again saluted Ulrike and her daughter. This freedom was the privilege of his rank, and of his character as host; and for its exercise, he once more received the grateful acknowledgments of Heinrich Frey. The females were then committed to the care of Gisela, the warder's daughter, who, in the absence of its more noble mistress, happened to be the presiding person of her sex in the place.

"Thou art thrice welcome, upright and loyal Heinrich!" exclaimed the Count, heartily, while he led the Burgomaster by the hand, into one of the rooms of honor—"None know thy worth, and thy constancy to thy friends, better than the master of this poor castle; and none love thee better."

"Thanks, well-born Emich, and such duty as one of poor birth and breeding can and should pay to a noble so honoured and prized. I am little used to courtesies, beyond those which we burghers give and take in the streets, and may not do myself full justice in the expression of reverence and respect, but I pray you, Herr Count, to take the desire for the performance."

"Wert thou the Emperor's most favored chamberlain, thy speech could not do thee more credit. Though Deurckheim be not Madrid, it is a well-respected and courtly city, and none need envy the Roman, or the Parisian, that dwelleth there. Here

is my kinsman of Viederbach, a knight that Providence hath cast a little loosely upon the world since the downfall of his Mediterranean island of Rhodes, and who hath travelled far and near, and he swears, daily, thy town hath no parallel, for its dimensions."

"Considered as a mountain city of no great magnitude, meine Herren, we do not blush at the aspect of our ancient walls."

"Thou needest not, and thou must have noted that I spoke in reference to its size. Monsieur Latouche is a gentleman that cometh from the capital of King Francis itself; and no later than this morning, he remarked on the neatness, and wealth, and other matters of consideration, that make themselves apparent, even to the stranger, in thy well-governed and prosperous borough."

The Burgomaster acknowledged the compliment, by a profound inclination and a gratified eye, for no flattery is so palpable as not to meet a welcome with those who labor for public distinction; and Emich well knew, that the police and order of his city were weak spots in Heinrich Frey's humility.

"Lord Emich scarce does me justice," returned the pliant Abbé, "since I found many other causes of admiration. The deference that is paid to rank in thy populace, and the manner in which the convenience of the honourable is respected, are particularly worthy of commendation."

"The churchman is right, Lord Emich—for, of all the towns in Germany, I do not think it easy to find another in which the poor and base are so well taught to refrain from thrusting their importunities and disadvantages on the gentle, as in our Deurckheim. I think my lord the Count must have observed the strict severity and cautious justice of our rules in this particular?"

"None know them better, nor does any heed them more. I cannot recall the moment, cousin Albrecht,

when any unpleasant intrusion on my privileges hath ever occurred within its gates. But I keep you from refreshing yourselves, worthy friends. Give us leave a little ;—we will seek you again, at your own convenience."

The Knight and the Abbé took this intimation of the desire of the Count to be alone with the Burgomaster in good part, and withdrew without unnecessary delay. When alone, Emich again took Heinrich Frey by the hand, and led him away into a part of the castle where none presumed to intrude without an especial errand. Here he entered one of those narrow rooms, which were devoted to secret uses, and which was well termed a closet, being in effect but little larger and scarcely better lighted, than the straitened apartments to which we give the same appellation in these later times.

When fairly protected from observation, and removed beyond the danger of eaves-droppers and spies, the Count threw aside his cloak, unbuckled his sword-belt, and assumed the manner of one at his ease. The Burgomaster took a seat on a stool, in deference to his companion's rank; while the latter, without seeming sensible of the act, seated himself at his side, in the only chair that the closet contained. Whoever has had much intercourse with Asiatics, or with Mussulmans of the southern shore of the Mediterranean, must have frequently observed the silent, significant, manner with which they regard each other, when disposed to court or to yield confidence; the eye gradually kindling, and the muscles of the mouth relaxing, until the feeling is fully betrayed in a smile. This is one of the means employed by men who dwell under despotic and dangerous governments, and where the social habits are much tinctured with violence and treachery, of assuring one another of secret faith and ready support. There is a sort of similar freemasonry in all conditions of

life, in which frank and just institutions do not spread their mantle equally over the powerful and the weak, superseding, by the majesty of the law, the necessity of these furtive appeals to the pledges and sympathies of confidants. Such, in some degree, was the nature of the communication with which Emich of Hartenburg now commenced his private intercourse with Heinrich Frey. The Count first laid his square, bony, hand on the knee of the Burgomaster, which he squeezed until the iron fingers were nearly buried in the fleshy protuberance. Each turned his head toward his companion, looking askance, as if they mutually understood the meaning of what was conveyed by this silent coquetry. Still, notwithstanding the apparent community of thought and confidence, the countenance and air of each was distinguished by the personal character and the social station of the individual. The eye of the Baron was both more decided, and more openly meaning, than that of the Burgomaster; while the smile of the latter appeared rather like a faint reflection of the inviting expression of the former, than the effect of any inward impulse.

"Hast heard of last night's success?" abruptly demanded the Count.

"Nothing of the sort hath gladdened me, Herr Count; my heart yearns to know all, if it touches your high interests."

"The mass-singing rogues are stripped of their wine-tribute! Of that much are they fairly and legally disburthened! Thou knowest of our long-intended trial of heads; I had intended to have prayed thee to be a second at the banquet, but the presence of these idlers put some restraint on my hospitality. Thou wouldest have proved a stanch second in such an onset, Heinrich!"

"I thank my lord the Count, and shall deem the grace as good as accomplished in the wish. I am

not worse than another at board, and may boast of some endurance in the way of liquor, but the seriousness of the times admonishes us, of civic authority, to be prudent. There is a wish in the people to be admitted to certain unreasonable and grave privileges, such as the right of vending their wares in the market-place at unseasonable hours, when the convenience of the burgomasters would be much vexed by the concession; and other similar innovations, against which we must make a firm stand, lest they come, in time, to invade our general authority and cause an unnatural convulsion. Were we to give way to pretensions so extravagant, Herr Count, the town would come to general confusion; and the orderly and respectable city of Deurckheim would justly merit to be compared to the huts of those countries of which they speak in the distant land of America, that hath so much, of late, given cause to writings and conversation. We need, therefore, look to the example set; for we have busy enemies, who make the most of the smallest indulgences. At another time, I would gladly have drained Heidelburg to your gracious honor."

"Thou wouldest not have been in danger of observation here; and, by the three holy Kings of Koeln, I should know how to tutor any prying knave that might chance to thrust a curious eye within these walls! But thy discretion is worthy of thy prudence, Heinrich; for, with thee, I deem the time serious for all lovers of established order, and of the peace of mankind. What would the knaves, that they thus trouble thy authority? Are they not fed and clad? and do they not now possess privileges out of number? The greedy rogues, if left to their humors, would fain envy their betters each delicate morsel they carry to their mouths, or each drop of generous rhenish that moistens their lips!"

"I fear, well-born Emich, that this spirit of cov-

etousness is in their vile natures! I have rarely consented to any little yielding to their entreaties, such as a wish to swell out the time of their merry-makings, or a desire like this of the market-place, that the taste of the indulgence hath not given a relish for fuller fare. No; he that would govern quietly, and at his own ease, must govern thoroughly; else shall we all become illiterate savages, fitter for the forests of these Indies, than for our present rational and charitable civilization."

"Braver words were never uttered in thy council-hall, and well do I know the head that conceived them! Had there been occasion to have summoned thee hither for the banquet, the excuse should have satisfied, though the vineyards were the forfeiture. But what didst think, friend Heinrich, of the priests to-day, and of their warlike company!"

"'Tis plain Duke Friedrich still upholds them; and to deal frankly with my lord the Count, the men-at-arms have the air of fellows that are not likely to yield the hill without fair contention."

"Thinkest thou thus, Burgomaster? 'Twere a thousand pities that men of tried mettle should do each other harm, for the benefits and pleasure of a community of shaven Benedictines! What is there to urge in favor of pretensions so audacious as these they prefer, and which are so offensive, both to me, as a noble of the empire, and to all of any note or possessions in Deurckheim?"

"They lay great stress, Herr Count, on the virtue of ancient usages, and on the sacred origin of their mission."

"As much respect as thou wilt for rights that are sealed by time, for such is the stamp that gives value to my own fair claims; and many of thy city privileges come chiefly of use. But the matter between us is of abuse; and I hold it to be unworthy of those

who can right themselves, to submit to wrong. Do the monks still press the town for dues?"

"With offensive importunity. If matters be not quickly stayed, we shall come to open and indecent dissension."

"I would give a winter's enjoyment of my chases, were Friedrich more sorely pressed!" exclaimed the Count, laying his hand again on the Burgomaster's knee, whose countenance he studied with a significance that was not lost on his companion. "I speak merely in the manner of his being driven to know his true and fast friends from those who are false."

Heinrich Frey remained silent.

"The Elector is a mild and loving prince, but one sorely ridden by Rome! I fear we shall never have a tranquil neighborhood, notwithstanding our long forbearance, until the Church is persuaded to limit its authority to its duties."

The eyelids of the Burgomaster lowered, as it might be in reflection.

"And chiefly, Heinrich, am I troubled lest my good and loving Deurckheimers lose this occasion to do themselves right," continued the Count, squeezing the knee he still grasped, until even the compact citizen flinched with the force of the pressure. "What say they in the council-hall touching this matter?"

There was no longer any plausible apology for the silence of the Burgomaster, who did not answer, however, without working the heavy muscles of his face, as if delivered of his opinions with pain.

"Men speak their minds among us, noble-born Count, much as Duke Friedrich prospers, or fails, in his warfare. When we hear good tidings from the other side of the river, the brotherhood fares but badly in our discourses; but when the Elector's warriors triumph, we hold it prudent to remember they have friends."

"God's truth! Herr Heinrich, it is full time that you come to certain conclusions, else shall we be saddled to the end of our days by these hard-riding priests! Art thou not wearied with all their greedy exactions, that thou waitest patiently for more?"

"In that particular, a little sufficeth for our humors. There is not a city between Constance and Leyden, that is more quickly satisfied with paying than our Deurckheim: but we are husbands and fathers, Herr Count, and men that bear a heavy burthen of authority; and we must be wary, lest in throwing aside one portion of the load, space be found on our shoulders to place another that is heavier. When I would speak of your strong love to the town, there are distrustful tongues, that question me sorely of its fruits, and of your own honorable intentions in our behalf."

"To all of which thou couldest not be wanting of replies! Have I not often entertained thee with my loving wishes in behalf of the citizens?"

"If wishes in our behalf could serve our interests, the townsmen might, in their proper right, put in a claim to high favor. In the way of longing for our own success, Antwerp itself is not our better."

"Nay, thou takest my meaning unkindly: what Emich of Hartenburg wishes for his friends, he finds means to perform. But we will not trouble digestion, as we are about to feed, with these tiresome details—"

"I pray you, Herr Count, not to doubt my means; —little troubles me, when——"

"Thou shalt yield to my humor. What! is not the Count of Leiningen master in his own castle. Not a word more will I hear till thou hast tasted of my poor hospitality. Did my knaves serve thee, as I commanded yesterday, with the fat buck that fell by my own hand, Heinrich?"

"A thousand thanks, mein Herr—they did, and right cheerfully. I gave the rogues a silver penny for

their largess; and the dust of the Jaegerthal was washed away in heavy draughts of our wine of the plain."

"I would have it so; between friends, there should be no niggardly reserve, in the way of courtesies," said Emich, rising. "Dost not bethink thee, Burgomaster, of looking among the youths of Deurckheim for a son to stay thy age? Meta hath reached the years when maidens gladly become wives."

"The wench is not ignorant of her time of life, and the search of a suitable husband hath not failed to give me fatherly concern. I do not presume to compare our conditions and early lives in aught that is disrespectful, mein Herr Graf; but, touching all that is common to great and little, the youth of this day seem not as they were in the time of our young manhood."

"Priest-ridden, Burgomaster;—too much of Rome in our laws and habits. God's my life! when I first mounted steed, in the court below, I could have leaped the convent towers, did a Benedictine dare gainsay the feat!"

"That would have been a miracle little short of the raising of their convent walls," answered Heinrich, laughing at his companion's flight, and rising in deference to the attitude the noble had been pleased to take. "These Benedictines have been careless of their advantages, else might they still have kept the circumstance of that miracle as much beyond dispute, as it was in our young days, Lord Count."

"And what say they in Deurckheim, now, touching the affair?"

"Nay, men treat it, at present, as they treat other disputable subjects. Since this outcry of Brother Luther, there have appeared many who call in question not only that, but divers others of the Abbey's feats."

The Count unconsciously crossed himself, seeming to ponder gloomily on the subject, within his own mind. Then glancing towards his companion, he perceived that he was standing.

"I cry thy mercy, worthy Burgomaster; but my inattention hath given thee this pain. My leg hath been so much of late suspended in the stirrup, that it hath need of straightening; but it should not, in justice, cause thee this inconvenience. I pray thee, Herr Frey, be seated."

"That would ill become my station in your presence, noble and well-born Emich; nor would it do fit credit to my reverence and affection."

"Nay, I will hear none of this. Thy seat, Master Heinrich, and that without delay, lest I seem to overlook thy merits."

"I pray mein Herr Graf not to do himself this wrong; nay, if it be your honorable will—I blush at mine own daring—if I consent, I call my lord to witness 'tis only in profound respect for his will!"

During this struggle of courtesy, the Count succeeded, by means of gentle violence, in forcing the Burgomaster to resume his seat. Heinrich had yielded with a species of maiden coyness; but when he found that, instead of occupying his own humble stool, he had unwittingly been forced into the armchair of the noble, he rebounded from the cushion, as if the leather contained enough of the electric fluid to bid defiance to the nonconductor qualities of the ample woollen garment in which his nether person was cased.

"Gott bewahre!" exclaimed the Burgomaster, in harsh, energetic German: "The empire would cry out against this scandal, were it known! I owe it to my reputation to deny myself an honor so little deserved."

"And I to my authority to enforce my will, and to proclaim thy deserts."

Here the amiable force on the part of the Count, and the courteous coquetry of Heinrich Frey, were resumed, until the latter, fearful of offending by longer resistance, was obliged to submit, protesting, however, to the last, against the apparent presumption on his own part, and against the great injustice which the lord of the hold was doing to his own rights, by thus insisting.

A distinguished foreign orator once pronounced the titles of honor, and the social distinctions that are conferred by the European governments, to be the "cheap defence of nations." This opinion strikes us to be merely one of the thousand bold fallacies that have been broached to uphold existing interests, without reference to their true effects, or to their inherent justice. This "cheap defence," like the immortal Falstaff, who was not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in others, is the origin of a hundred sufficiently costly habits, that leave him who bears the burthen but little reason to exult in its discovery. We recommend to all one-eyed economists, who still retain any faith in this well-known opinion of the English orator, to read that letter in the Spectator, in which a city youth relates the manner he is driven to vindicate his own reserve to his fair country cousins, who would fain reproach him with an ungraceful disrespect of his holiday privileges, by reminding them of the calculations of the individual who refused to indulge in cheese-cakes, because they brought with them so many other unnecessary expenditures.

But whether honors of the description just alluded to, do or do not form any portion of the economy of a nation, there is little question but flattery, like this which Emich has just bestowed on the Burgomaster, is one of the subtle and most powerful agents of the great in effecting their secret purposes. Few are they—alas, how few!—that possess a vision

sufficiently clear, and an ambition so truly noble, as to look beyond the narrow and vulgar barriers of human selfishness, and to regard truth as it came from God, without respect for persons and things, except as they are the instruments of his will. It is certain that Heinrich Frey had little pretension to be one of this scrutinizing and elevated class; for when he found himself fairly seated in the chair of the Count of Hartenburg, with the noble himself standing, his sensations were like those which are felt by the philosopher of the other hemisphere, who is authorized to put a ribbon at his button-hole;—or the tradesman of this, who is elected to the common-council of his native city, after being run on both tickets. Still he greatly regretted there was no one to envy his preferment; for, after the first soothing effect on his own self-love, that unquiet spirit which haunts us to the last, disfiguring the fairest pictures, and casting its alloy into every scheme of happiness, suggested that his triumph would be imperfect without a witness. Just as this rebellious feeling became troublesome, there appeared at the door of the closet, the very being of all others that the Burgomaster would have chosen to see him in the enjoyment of this high honor. A gentle tap announced the presence of the intruder, and when the authoritative voice of Emich had given the permission, the mild Ulrike appeared on the threshold.

Surprise was strongly painted on the features of the Burgomaster's wife. The husband had crossed his legs, and was indulging in his ease, with a sort of noble indifference to the unusual situation in which he was placed, when this extraordinary sight greeted the eyes of his amazed consort. So absolute and so tenacious were the rules of Germany on all things that concerned the respect due to rank, that even one as little troubled by ambition as the meek

Ulrike, had great difficulty in believing her senses, when she beheld Heinrich Frey thus suddenly elevated to a seat of honor in the presence of a Count of Leiningen.

"Nay, enter without fear, my good Ulrike," said Emich, graciously; "thy worthy husband and I do but indulge in mutual friendship, while my varlets prepare an unworthy banquet. Do not think to break our discourse."

"I only hesitate, noble Emich, at seeing Heinrich Frey preferred to that seat, while the Lord of Hartenburg stands, like one of humble birth, at his side!"

"Touch not the matter, meine Frau," said the husband condescendingly. "Thou art a loving consort, and art well enough amid thy sex, and in questions that belong to thy breeding; but in an affair, like this, between mein Herr Graf and me, thou mayest only mar what thou canst not mend."

"By the life of the princely Karl! master Heinrich, you do insufficient justice to Ulrike's discernment! Were mine own Ermengarde among us, thou shouldst see that we prize thy loving wife little less than we esteem thee. But it were better that we inquire of Ulrike the occasion of her visit, before we attempt to school her on matters of deportment."

Though so rough and unnurtured on many of the points that are now deemed essential even to an indifferent civilization, Emich had a quick interest for the perception of character, and possessed as much of the refinement that marks a superior condition in life, as the state of the age and the situation of his own country permitted. There can be no greater mistake than to imagine that mere nominal rank is any pledge for a correspondent degree of refinement, since every thing is relative in this world, and where the base of the pillar is rude and little

polished, it would be a violation of all architectural keeping, to expect a capital of a different style. Thus it is that we, without any social orders but those of convention, are struck with so many glaring discrepancies among people whose patricians, having studied all that is factitious and plausible in breeding, are still deficient in the grand essentials of reason and humanity, simply because the roots of the society, of which they are only the more luxuriant branches, are planted in the soil of ignorance and debasement. The Count of Hartenburg had possessed ample opportunities of witnessing how much the intellectual qualities of the Burgomaster's wife were superior to those of her husband; and he had sufficient discrimination and experience to be quite aware of the importance of conciliating such an ally in advancing his own particular views. It was in this spirit, therefore, that he ventured on so blunt a reproof of Heinrich's superciliousness, and volunteered the compliment to the spouse; probably hazarding the latter, from an intimate conviction that most husbands are content to hear eulogies on those who are so completely in their power as their own wives.

"Since it is your honorable pleasure, Herr Count, for God's sake let the woman come in," answered Heinrich, still, however, without changing an attitude so soothing to his self-esteem. "If she should see me seated in a presence in which it would much better become me to kneel, why it may help to show that God hath given her a companion that is not altogether without the wórld's esteem, little as he may merit it. Enter freely, therefore, good Ulrike, since it is my lord's pleasure; but presume not on his condescension to me, which is rather a mark of great love for our town, than any matter connected with domestic life."

"In all that the high-born Count hath done honor to any of us, whether as of Deurckheim, or as his unworthy neighbors, I desire respectfully to be grateful," returned the wife, who, by this time, had recovered from her surprise, and who now advanced farther into the narrow room, with the modest self-possession which ordinarily distinguished her manner:—"If I do not come amiss, I crave to be heard of both, in a matter that toucheth nearly a mother's heart; and a matter, as it is of Heinrich Frey's child I would fain speak, that I trust may not be indifferent to my lord the Count."

"Were it of mine own little Kunigunde, the subject should not be more welcome!" said the noble. "Speak freely then, gentle Ulrike, and with the same simplicity thou wouldest use were it only to thy husband's ear."

"Thou hearest, woman! mein Herr Graf enters, as it were, into all our tribulations and happiness, an' he were no other than a brother. So mince not the matter, but deal frankly with us; though I admonish thee not to push thy words to all the familiarity of household discourse."

"As it is of a subject so near, I pray leave to close the door, before more is uttered."

The words of Ulrike were cut short by a hasty gesture of approbation from her husband, and by the Count himself, who, with more of the consideration and manner of a gentleman, performed the desired office with his own hands, thus admitting the wife, as it were, into the very cabinet of their secret councils.

CHAPTER XII.

"You would be another Penelope: yet they
Say, all the yarn she spun, in Ulysses' absence, did
But fill Ithaca full of moths."

Coriolanus.

When Ulrike found herself fairly closeted with the Count and her husband, and was quietly seated on the stool which the former, spite of the latter's protestations to the contrary, had insisted on her taking, she cast her mild eyes about her, with that expressive and touching appeal that a woman is apt to make, when she feels called on to act as the adviser, if not the guardian, of him whom nature intended and the law presumes, is both able and willing to discharge those offices for her. Notwithstanding Heinrich's obstinacy and masculine swaggering, many occasions had arrived, in the course of their matrimonial life, to produce a latent conviction in both, that the order of things was a little inverted, as respects judgment and moral authority, by inclining one to lean, though with but an indifferent grace, where he should have supported; and tempting the other, at times, to overstep her sex's duties, though it was always done with an intuitive perception of her sex's seemliness and means.

"For this condescension I thank my Lord Emich, and thee, Heinrich," commenced the thoughtful matron; "for it is not, at all times, advisable for the wife to intrude unbidden even to her husband's presence."

A significant ejaculation, which might almost merit a coarser term, was the manner in which the Burgomaster expressed his assent, during the brief pause that succeeded this excuse of Ulrike. The more courteous host bowed with sufficient respect, though, even by his manner, it was evident he was

getting impatient to know the real motive of the interruption.

"We are too well pleased to receive thee, to remember the usages and rights of manhood," answered the latter, with a kindness of manner that was insensibly extorted by the winning and feminine qualities of her he addressed, and which, in some degree, softened the pretensions of his language—"Proceed with thy matter, for none can be more ready to listen."

"Thou hearest, good Ulrike! the Herr Count is willing to remember thou art a Burgomaster's consort; and, as he is pleased to say, we are truly impatient to be let into the cause of thy sudden visit."

The thoughtful Ulrike received this encouragement like one accustomed to be treated, in some measure, as a being inferior in capacity and force to her husband, but not without a shade like that which is produced by unmerited humiliation. Smiling—and few, even in early and attractive youth, had so sweet an expression, when her countenance thus gleamed, whether it were in pleasure, or in melancholy—smiling, as it might be, partly in female gentleness, and partly in sadness, she commenced the purport of her visit, coming, however, to her true object with great reserve and with the caution of a woman accustomed to influence, rather than to control.

"For the great kindness and condescension of the Herr Emich, in behalf of Heinrich Frey, and of all that are his, no one is more grateful than I," she said; "if I may now seem to trouble him with the concerns of a family on which he has already so freely lavished favors"——

"And friendship, good Ulrike."

"And friendship, since you permit me, noble Count, to use the word—but, if I now seem to trespass beyond breeding, by troubling your mind with

a concern that is so remote from your own interests, I trust you will remember a mother's tenderness, and think of the highborn Ermengarde, whose anxiety for her own offspring may furnish some excuse for that I feel for mine."

"Hath aught befell the blooming Meta?"

"God's my life!" exclaimed the troubled Heinrich, abandoning his much-prized seat, in the suddenness of paternal alarm. "Hath the wench suffered from the over-rich eels of the Rhine? or is she massed to death by these accursed monks?"

"Our child is well in the body, and, the blessed Maria be praised! she is pure and innocent in mind," returned Ulrike. "I have little cause for aught but gratitude in either of these behalfs;—but, she is of an age when girlish fancies become unsettled, and the flexible female spirit seeks impressions from others than those whom nature hath made its guardians."

"This is some of thy usual incomprehensibilities, good woman, and language that is not easily understood by any but thyself. The noble Graf hath no leisure to hunt up new ideas to maintain a discourse in subtleties. Had the girl indeed tasted too freely of the rare dish which the honest Burgomaster of Mannheim so kindly sent me, as I at first feared, no doubt the means to cure might be found in Hartenburg; but thou askest too much, wife of mine, when thou wouldest have any but thine own husband enter into all the cunning niceties that sometimes beset thy imagination."

"Nay, Master Heinrich, here may be more urgent matter than thou thinkest: thy dame is not a woman whose opinions are to be neglected. Wilt proceed with thy recital, good Ulrike?"

"Our child is at that period of life," continued the mother, too much accustomed to the manner of her husband to permit it to divert her thoughts from

their main intention—"when the young of every sort begin to think of the future. It is a principle that God hath implanted, Herr Emich, and therefore it is for good; and we, who have watched over the infancy of our offspring with so much anxiety, have trained their youth with so much care, and have so often trembled for their noon-time, must, sooner or later, consent to loosen the sweet ties that bind us to our second selves, in order that the great ends of the creation shall be accomplished."

"Umph!" ejaculated Heinrich.

"Nay, gentle Ulrike," said the Count, "maternal love hath drawn this picture in stronger colors than may be necessary. When the time for matrimony comes, God's my life! daughter of thine and honest Heinrich Frey, need not wear maiden's coif a day longer than is necessary to do suitable reverence to the church. Here have I youths, out of number, that look to the house of Leiningen for grace, any one of whom would be glad to wive with the damsel I should name. There is young Friedrich Zantzinger, the orphan of my last deputy in the villages of the plain; he is a lad that would gladly do harder service to gain my love."

"When old Friedrich left the boy fatherless, he left him without a penny," drily rejoined the Burgomaster.

"That is a fault which might be mended; but I have others that can be named. What thinkest thou of the eldest son of my Heidelburg attorney, worthy Conrad Walther?"

"Curse the knave! I hate him from my heart."

"Thou art warm, Master Heinrich, against one that I both trust and favor."

"I cry your mercy, Herr Graf; but a sudden rising of the bile, at the mention of the fellow's name, got the better of respect," answered the Burgomaster, with more moderation, who, as he saw by the

lowering look of Emich's brow, the necessity of explanation, continued, with rather more openness than he might have thought necessary under circumstances of less urgency: "Perhaps the high-born Count was never possessed of the matter of our late controversy?"

"Nay, I pretend not to judge my friends,—"

"Let but my lord condescend to hear me, and I leave him arbiter between us. It is well known to you, Herr Emich, that collections were made, and charity asked, in behalf of the peasants who suffered, the past year, from the sudden rising of the Rhine. Among others, the good Christians of our town were importuned for succor; and, for none will deny that it was a sad visitation of Providence, we gave freely as became our several means. To prevent improper uses of the money, in all cases of liberal donations, the sealed bond of the donor, at a near day, was asked in preference to the silver; and mine was granted for the fair sum of twelve crowns, as a poor donation suited to my hopes and station. It so fell out, Herr Graf, that those charged with the distribution had occasion for their money before the instruments were up; and they sent agents among us, in order to enter into such negotiations as the cases might need. Gold was scarce at the moment; and because, in regaining my bond, I had a heedful regard to mine own interests, the misdealing Conrad would fain transport me, like a thief, before the authorities of Heidelburg, to undergo the penalties of a usurer. Son of his shall never call me father, with your gracious leave, nobly-born Count of Leiningen!"

"This truly offereth some impediment to the affair; but, failing of young Conrad, I have others that may be accounted worthy of this advantage. So put thy maternal heart at ease, good Ulrike, and trust to my active friendship to dispose of the girl."

"The Burgomaster's consort had been a patient listener during the short but characteristic digression of her husband. Trained in the opinions of the times, she did not possibly endure all that a mother and a wife, of equal native sensibility, might now suffer at so evident a debasement of her sex; but as the laws of nature are permanent, neither did she escape a pang of wounded feeling as she heard the different expedients that were so hastily devised for the future disposal of one who formed her chief happiness in life. There was less of that hectic color, which commonly gave a lustre to eyes that were by nature rather melancholy than bright, and her voice was fuller of emotion than before, as she continued.

"For all this heed of me and mine, I again thank the Herr Count; but there is a power that is stronger with the young than the counsel of the experienced, or even than the wishes of their friends," she said. "My intent, in intruding myself unbidden into this secret conference, was to say that Meta had listened to the voice of her sympathies more than to the usages of her class, and chosen for herself."

The Count and Heinrich Frey stared at the speaker in mute surprise, for neither fully comprehended her meaning; while Ulrike herself, one of her objects being accomplished, in having made this long-dreaded declaration in the presence of a person able to repress the anger of her husband, sate silent, inwardly trembling for the consequences.

"Wilt thou explain the meaning of thy worthy consort, Herr Heinrich?" abruptly asked the Count.

"Zum Henker! you ask me to perform an office, Lord Count, that might better fit a Benedictine, or a clerk. When Ulrike, who is an excellent and obedient companion in the main, once gets upon the stilts of fancy, I never pretend to be able to raise an idea to the level of her shoe-buckle. Go to! thou

hast well spoken, wife of mine; and it will now be better to seek our child, lest yonder cavalier of Rhodes be oiling her ears with the unction of flattery."

"Nay, by my house's honors! but I will know more of this matter, thy fair and virtuous consort consenting, Master Heinrich. Wilt explain thyself freely, dame?"

Whether it be from the instinct of weakness and delicacy, or only the fruit of precepts constantly inculcated, a virtuous woman rarely admits the existence of the sentiment of love, either in herself or in any that is dear to her, without a feeling of shame, and possibly not without an intuitive knowledge that she is conceding some of the vantage-ground of her sex's privileges.

This feeling was apparent in Ulrike, by the slow but complete suffusion of her cheek, and by the manner in which her looks avoided those of Emich, spite of the self-possession and calm of her years.

"I would merely say, Herr Emich," she replied, "that Meta, like all who are young and innocent, hath fancied an image of perfection, and that she hath found an original for her picture in a youth of the Jaegerthal. While of this mind, she cannot, in honesty or in maidenly respect, become the bride of any other than him she loves."

"The affair grows clearer," returned the Count, smiling like one who took no very deep interest in the matter; "and it is as well explained as heart could wish—at least, heart of the youth in question. What thinkest thou of this, Herr Burgomaster?"

The comprehension of Heinrich Frey could not altogether misconceive so plain an explanation, and, since the moment when his wife had ceased speaking, he sat regarding her mild but troubled countenance, with parted lips and open eyes, like a man that first

learns some unlooked-for intelligence of great moment.

"Herr Teufel!" exclaimed Heinrich, taking up the last words of the Baron, unconscious of the disrespect of what he did—"Art talking of our own natural-born child?"

"Of none other. In whom else have I this motherly affection?—or for what other can I feel this deep concern?"

"Dost mean that Meta—my daughter, Meta Frey—hath inclination for son of woman, except it may be the natural love and reverence she beareth her own father?—that the girl hath truant and free fancies?"

"I say nothing to give this opinion of Meta—my daughter, Meta," returned Ulrike, with womanly dignity. "Our child has done no more than listened to the secret whisperings of nature; and, in yielding her affections to a youth whom she hath often seen, and long known, she hath merely paid an homage to merit, that the most virtuous are the most apt to yield."

"Go to, Ulrike! Thou art well enough among thy household, and a woman for whom I have esteem; but these visions with which thou art so often troubled, give thee an air, at times, of being of less discernment than thou mayest fairly claim to be. Excuse the dame, Herr Count; for, though her own husband, and a little weak on the subject of her infirmities perhaps, there is not a more thrifty manager, a more faithful spouse, or a kinder mother in the Palatinate."

"Nay, thou little need say this to me! None know the worth of Ulrike better; and, I may add, few respect her so much. It were well to hear further of this matter, Heinrich; for, to treat thee in candor, there may lay more beneath this opening of the excellent wife, than is at first apparent.

Our Meta hath seen the qualities of some worthy youth sooner than they have struck the eye of her quick-sighted father, thou wouldst say. Is it not so, dame?"

"I would say that the heart of my child is so closely bound in that of another, as to leave little hope of happiness, should her matrimonial duties teach her to forget him."

"Thou thinkest then, good dame, that the young fancies of a female, when once indulged, are not to be removed by the offices of wife and mother?—that a caprice of the imagination is stronger than a vow made at the altar?"

Though the eyes of both the Count and the Burgomaster were riveted on the fine and speaking countenance of Ulrike, the volume of eloquent nature, that was thus opened to their observation, proved little better than a blank. Strong and dramatic exhibitions of feeling require but little interpretation for the dullest faculties; but few indeed are they who are capable of comprehending the secret workings of a spirit chastened and restrained as that of a virtuous, but unhappily paired woman. There is, perhaps, no one aspect of human nature more common-place, or more easily understood, than that which is hourly offered by a worldly-minded and capricious fair. She runs her little career, seemingly as erratic as a comet, though, in truth, her course is always to be calculated on the infallible principles of vanity and selfishness; but no secret is more hermetically sealed against impertinent and vulgar curiosity, than the elevated sentiments which sustain the suffering and silent female who is truly instinct with the high qualities of her sex.

We are no railer at the domination of man; for we are persuaded that he who would wish to transform the being that was created to be his solacer and companion—his guide in moral darkness, and

his sharer in sorrow as in joy—into a worldly competitor, changing love and confidence to rivalry and contention, is but miserably instructed in that sublime ordinance of nature, which has thus separated the highest order of its creation into two great classes, so replete with mutual consolation and happiness.

Had the wife of the Burgomaster arisen, and, in chosen terms, made an appeal to the sympathies of her companions, in which language should unite with manner to produce an effect, she might have been understood, as the every-day reader understands all such pictures of female character; but where she sat, silent, suffering, and meek, she was completely concealed from any means of comprehension possessed by either. Her eye did not kindle, for long and patient subordination had taught her to submit to the misconstructions of her husband; nor scarcely did the faint color of her cheek deepen, since the load at her heart counteracted the natural impulses of pride and resentment.

"I think, Lord Count, that when an innocent and youthful female heart yields to a power that nature perhaps has made irresistible," she said, "it, at least, merits to be treated tenderly. Meta hath few fancies of the kind you mention; and the attachment she feels, though doubtless deepened by those colors which the least experienced in the truths of life are the most apt to paint, is but the natural consequence of much association, and of great deserving on the part of the young man."

"This is getting to be plain, Herr Emich," said Heinrich Frey, pithily, "and must needs be looked to. Wilt condescend to name the youth thou meanest, Ulrike?"

"Berchthold Hintermayer."

"Berchthold Teufelstein!" exclaimed the Burgomaster, laughing, though there was something like

a secret consciousness of danger in the very manner in which he gave loose to his merriment. "A penniless boy is truly a fit husband for child of mine!"

The quiet, blue eye of Ulrike was fastened on her husband; but she averted it with sensitive haste, lest it might betray that she was thinking of the time when her own father had consented to her marriage with one nearly as poor, merely because the penetration of the parent had discovered those qualities of prudence and gainful industry in his townsman, which after-experience so fully developed.

"He is not rich, Heinrich," was her answer; "but he is worthy: and why need a chill be thrown on the heart of Meta, for the desire of that which she already hath in sufficient plenty?"

"Hear you this, Herr Emich? My wife is lifting the curtain of privacy before your respected eyes, with a freedom for which I could fain cry mercy."

"Berchthold is a youth I love," gravely observed the Count.

"In that case, I shall say nothing disrespectful of the lad, who is a worthy forester, and in all things suited to his service in the family of Hartenburg; still, he is but a forester, and a very penniless one. I had not thought to dispose of the girl so soon, for a little maidenly leisure does none of the sex injury, Lord Count; but as she hath her head set upon this Berchthold, it may be well to wrap it in a matron's coif, by way of filling it with ideas more suited to her hopes."

"The remedy may prove fatal, Heinrich!" mildly observed Ulrike, raising her tearful eye to the obstinate features of the Burgomaster.

"Nay, I ought to know the constitution of the family; what has so well succeeded with the mother, cannot harm the child."

The wife did not reply. But Emich of Hartenburg had been deeply interested by her gentle and

winning manner, for he had watched her countenance closely, and understood the womanly effort by which the appearance of calm was preserved. Turning to the Burgomaster, he laid a hand on his shoulder, with a friendly smile, and said—

"Herr Heinrich, thou hast a fair and gentle consort; but, I think, too, thou hast scarce less faith in me than in thy wife. Give us leave; I would fain reason this matter with Ulrike, without the aid of thy influence."

"A thousand thanks for the honor to me and mine, high-born Count! As to faith, I would leave the dame a year on Limburg-hill, without other thought than for her convenience; for none know the worth of Ulrike better, though she is so difficult to comprehend when her fancy is moulting. Now kiss me, dame, and prithee do no dishonor to the Count's counsel."

Thus saying, Heinrich Frey placed a hearty kiss on the soft cheek that the obedient Ulrike freely offered, and left his wife alone with the noble, without other thought than of the high distinction that was conferred on his name. The manner in which he prized the notice of the Baron was sufficiently manifested by the readiness with which he communicated the circumstance that Emich and his consort were closeted, on an affair touching the interests of the family of Frey, to all who would listen to his tale.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tales or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth!"
Shakspeare."

When the door was closed on the husband, the Count turned to the wife, and continued the discourse.

"I love young Berchthold Hintermayer, good Ulrike," he said, "and would gladly be of aid in this affair, which, I see plainly, thou hast much at heart."

"The mother would be unnatural that had not anxiety for the happiness of her child. In youth, Lord Count, we gaze before us, filling the dim ascent with scenes drawn after our wishes, and peopling the world with the beings that we deem most necessary to our hopes; but when we have reached the eminence, whence the commencement and the end of life can both be plainly seen, do we first find truth. I am as little disposed as another to venture rashly on a union that has no better security for its fruits than a blind and feverish passion, that will be certain to consume itself by its own fierceness; but, on the other hand, none who have known life as I, can be disposed to consider lightly those resemblances of taste and opinions, those gentle touches of character and disposition, that are most likely to conduce to wedded love."

"Thou art esteemed lucky in thine own consorting, dame?"

"God hath much blessed me in many mercies—the question is of Meta, my Lord Count."

Ulrike, spite of herself, had changed color; but, aided by the manner of matronly reserve she immediately assumed, the little emotion passed with

Emich as no more than a display of feminine reserve, that was intended to repress a curiosity he had no title to indulge.

"The question is of Meta, in sooth," he answered; "and, by Saint Benedict! the youth shall not want for friendly and free support. But favor should have favor's reward. If I give into thy humor in this concern of thy daughter's marriage, good Ulrike, in return, I expect of thee a service on which I scarce lay less stress."

The matron raised her eyes to the countenance of her companion, in surprise. One who had not so uniformly preserved her own self-respect, might have doubted of what she heard; but the look of the Burgomaster's wife merely conveyed a meaning of curiosity and innocence.

"You will deserve far more than I can bestow, Herr Count, should you do aught to secure the happiness of Meta."

"Fair wife," continued Emich, seating himself, and taking her hand, with the freedom which his superior rank and the usages of the country allowed, "thou knowest the manner in which these Benedictines have so long vexed our valley; and, being so deeply in the confidence of the honest Heinrich, thou must have suspected that, wearied of their insolence and exactions, we have seriously bethought us of the means by which to reduce them to the modesty that becometh their godly professions, and which might better justify their pretensions?"

Emich paused, and sat intently regarding the face of his quiet listener. He had unwittingly touched upon the very subject that had been the chief inducement with the Burgomaster's wife for intruding upon the privacy of the conspirators. She had long suspected their intentions; and, though she felt deep care for the future lot of Meta, and had gladly availed herself of a favorable occasion to break

the ice on a subject that, sooner or later, must be disclosed, her real object was to warn Heinrich against the probable consequences of the plot. In this disposition, then, she heard the Count with secret pleasure, and prepared herself to reply, in the manner she had long meditated.

"All that you say, Herr Count," she answered, "has more than once crossed my mind; and deeply have I grieved that those I so love and honor should thus meditate injury to the altars of God—plan desperate devices to interrupt his praise."

"How! dost thou call the whinings of these knaves praise of aught but their own hypocrisy?" interrupted Emich. "Are they not the instigators of most of our sins, by their example?—the parents of all the contention that troubles the neighborhood?—Consider, good Ulrike, that heaven is not a close into which souls are to be driven blindfolded; but that we, who are of the flock, have at least the right, as we have the means, of judging whether the shepherds are fit for their office, or not."

"And should they prove unequal to, or unworthy of their duties, where do we find authority to do them harm?"

"God's my life! good wife; are our swords nothing? Are a noble name, an ancient and high descent, a long-standing claim to command, and a stout heart, nothing?"

"Arrayed against the Almighty, they count as the leaves of your own forest, when fluttering in a gale;—less than the flakes of snow that drive, in winter, against the battlements of your strong castle. Limburg is reared in honor of God; and he that raises a hand against the sacred walls, will be apt to repent the rashness in woe. If there are unworthy ministers at its altars, there are also those that are worthy; and, were it not so, the mission is too high

to be sullied by any frailty of those who abuse their trusts."

The Count was disturbed; for Ulrike spoke earnestly, and in a voice of sweet persuasion. He leaned his chin upon a hand, as a man that pondered well on the hazards of his enterprise.

"What thinkest thou, Ulrike, of this brother of Wittenberg" he at length asked. "Could we but fairly make him out honest and wise, ecclesiastical authority for lowering the pride of Limburg might be had!"

"I am one of those who think Brother Luther honest; I am also one of those who think him mistaken: but even he is far from urging to deeds of violence."

"By Saint Benedict! woman, thou hast had converse with Father Arnolph, touching this question. Echo does not answer sound more faithfully than thou repeatest the sentiments of the Prior."

"It is not strange that they who love God should feel and speak alike in a matter affecting his honor. I have said naught to Father Arnolph, nor to any other of the Abbey, of your designs; for it is not easy for Ulrike Frey to forget she is both wife and mother. But I have prayed often, that the hearts of those who contemplate this dangerous sacrilege may be softened; and that, for their own safety, they may yet see the evil of their plot. Believe me, Count, the Dread Being who is worshipped in Limburg, will not forget to avenge himself of those who despise his power!"

"Thou art certain, Ulrike, that thy opinions have weight with me, for since childhood have I known and respected thy wisdom. Nay, had there not been want of those claims which birth can alone give, thou wouldst now be sitting in this castle its mistress, and not a guest. The self-denial which was practised, in order to do my father pleasure,

cost me much pain for many years; nor did I rightly regain my freedom, until the birth of my eldest born turned my hopes towards posterity."

It is seldom woman hears the acknowledgment of her influence with the stronger sex, without secret satisfaction. As there had been nothing in the attachment to which the Count alluded, to alarm her principles or to offend her delicacy, Ulrike listened to this reference to the feelings and incidents of their younger days, with a smile that produced an effect on her gentle features, which resembled the melancholy light which illuminated the chapel of the religious community in question; or which was mild, placid, and, if we may be permitted an expression so vague, tinged with hues of the past.

"We are no longer young, Emich," she answered, withdrawing her hand, under a keen impulse of its propriety—"and that which thou speakest belongs to a former age. But if thou dost, in sooth, entertain this opinion of my discretion, I have never said aught of thee but in thy honor. There were other reasons than the late Count's will, why I could not listen to thy suit, as thou wert then informed; for we are none of us the controllers of those sentiments which so much depend on taste or accident."

"By the sainted eleven thousand of Koeln! Heinrich Frey was scarce a youth to do this disadvantage to the heir of my line and name!"

"Heinrich Frey received my troth, as the noble Ermengarde received thine, Herr von Hartenburg," answered Ulrike, with the composure of one whose feelings had never been interested in the refusal to which she alluded, and with the dignity of a woman sensitively alive to her husband's character. "By Heaven's favor, we are both happier than if wedded either above or beneath our hopes. But if thou couldst deny thyself this boon—for such, in thy young fancies, didst thou believe my hand—to

oblige thy father of earth, wilt thou still defy him of Heaven, to gratify a longing less excusable?"

"Go to, Ulrike; thou pressest me out of reason; I know not fairly that I even meditate the enterprise thou meanest."

"Or, in other language, thou art not yet decided to commit the sacrilege. Before thy hand strikes the irretrievable blow, Herr Count, hear one that, in thy youth, thou professed to love, and who yet remembers thy preference, with grateful kindness."

"Thou art more indulgent as a matron than as a maid! This is the first word of pity for all the sorrow thou causedst my youth, that hath ever escaped thee!"

"Pity is a term it would ill become Ulrike Haitzinger to use to Emich von Leiningen. I said gratitude, Herr Count; for the woman that pretendeth not to feel this sentiment towards the honorable youth that has preferred her to all others of her sex, payeth an indifferent compliment to her own heart. I never disavowed that thy suit gave me both gratification and sorrow—gratification, that one of thy hopes could find sufficient in me to justify thy choice; sorrow, that thou wert necessarily disappointed."

"And had our births been nearer an equality, gentle Ulrike, hadst thou, like me, come of noble parentage, or I, like thee, been of more humble origin, couldst thou, in sooth, have found, in thy heart, the excuse for a different answer?"

"We are here to discuss other matters, Herr von Hartenburg, than these recollections of childish feelings."

"God's my life! Callest thou the pain of disappointed affection a childish sorrow? Thou wert ever tranquil in temper, and too much disposed to indifference on the subject of any warmth of heart, beyond the cold duties of family regard."

"This may be my fault, if you will, Count Emich, but I esteem it an advantage to feel strongest where duty most directs the affections."

"I remember thy final answer, made through thy friend young Berchthold's mother—I owe the lad no grace for the boon, were justice done—but thou answered, that the daughter of a Burgomaster was unfit to be the partner of a Baron; and thou prayedst me to render all duty to the Count my father, that his blessing might lighten the disappointment. Now, were the truth known, that reply cost thee no more than a simple refusal to one of thy maidens of some trifling grace!"

"Were the truth known, Emich, it would tell a different tale. Thou wert then young, and, though violent and hot-headed, not without many manly virtues; and thou greatly overratest the power of a thoughtful girl, if thou supposest she would gladly give pain, where she has received naught but esteem."

"And had I been thy neighbor's child—or wert thou the daughter of some equal of the Empire?—"

"In that case, Lord Count, the answer would have been the same," said the other, firmly, though her countenance evidently lost its tranquil brightness in a transient cloud: "The heart of Ulrike Haitzinger spoke in that reply, as well as her prudence."

"God's truth! thou art of cutting simplicity!" cried the Count, rising abruptly, and losing the expression of gentleness that the recollection of his better days and youthful feelings had given his features, in their usual hardened character. "Thou forgettest, Frau Frey, that I am a poor Count of Leiningen!"

"If I have failed in meet respect," returned the mild Ulrike, "I am now reminded of the fault, and will sin no more."

"Nay, I would say naught unkind or ungentle—but thou bruised my spirit, with a sore answer. We were conversing of the accursed monks, too, and blood gets hot at the mention of their names. Thou thinkest, then, my excellent neighbor, that, as Christians, we are bound to submit to all the exactions of these reverend knaves, and that to presume to right ourselves, is flying in the face of Heaven's authority?"

"You put the case in your own humor, Count. I have said naught of abject forbearance, or of unnecessary submission. If the Limburg monks are forgetful of their vows, the question is of their own safety:—as for us, we have to look that we do nothing wrongful of itself, or nothing that may be accounted disrespectful to Him we worship"——

"Prithee, good Ulrike," interrupted Emich, resuming his seat, in the familiar manner he had used at the commencement of the dialogue, "let us converse, in freedom, of this inclination of thy child. I love young Berchthold, and would fain do him service, were the means offering; but I greatly fear we shall have difficulty in bringing Heinrich to a complying state of mind."

"The apprehension of his refusal hath caused me much uneasiness, Herr von Hartenburg," returned the tender mother; "for the Burgomaster is not one of those who change their opinions readily. The over-zealous persuasion of friends increases his faith in himself, at times, instead of softening those resolutions which the wisest of us are apt to form hastily and without thought."

"This quality of thy excellent consort hath not escaped me. But Heinrich Frey was wived so happily himself, and with so little claim to riches on his own part, that he should not, in reason, bear too heavily on a youth that might have known better days, but for a hard fortune befalling his parents.

He that hath been poor, should have respect for poverty in others."

"I fear that such is not the working of human nature," answered the thoughtful wife, nearly unconscious of what she uttered. "Our experience in life would prove that they who have risen show the least tolerance for those who tarry in the rear; and, as none prize the gifts of rank and consequence so much as they to whom they are novelties, we ought not to expect the successful man too soon to forget the longings he felt when in adversity, nor him to whom honors are new, to look too closely into their vanity."

"Nay, Heinrich is not so young in consideration, or so new to fortune, as to be classed with these."

"Heinrich!" exclaimed the matron, across whose chaste brow there stole a crimson suffusion, that resembled the flush of even upon the snowy peaks of the Alps—"There is not question, here, of Heinrich Frey!"

The Count smiled till the mustachios curled upon his brown cheeks.

"Thou art right," he answered courteously; "it is in Berchthold and Meta that we are most interested. I think I see the means of accomplishing all we wish in their behalf, and means that offer so readily as to wear the air of being a gift of Providence."

"They are only the more welcome for their character."

"Thou knowest, Ulrike, that I am greatly burthened with charges that lay heavily on all of my rank. Ermengarde hath most of the qualities of her station, and a love of splendor that is costly; besides, this outfit of my young heir, who travels with the Emperor, hath much drained me of means, of late; else would I offer, of pure love for thee and thine, that which would make the connexion acceptable to

Heinrich. In this strait, borne down, as we all are, by the war, and saddled with the cost of keeping on foot so many men in Hartenburg, I see no other present means than that I have just mentioned."

"Or have not mentioned; for, in the desire to prove your inability to serve the youth, nothing hath yet been said of this favorable chance offered by Providence."

"I cry thy mercy! Thou hast rightly judged me, Ulrike, for I feel it a reproach to be able to do nothing for one I so esteem."

"Put no undue meaning on my words," interrupted the matron, smiling like one who wished to reassure her companion. "It has never entered my thoughts that the Counts of Leiningen are bound to portion all who serve them, according to their several hopes. It would lighten the heaviest purse in the Palatinate, Herr Emich, to furnish an equal marriage-gift to that which may be the share of Meta Frey."

"None know this better than I. Heinrich and I have often discoursed of the affair, and I could fain wish there existed no inequality of rank—but this is idle, and we will talk only of Berchthold and his hopes. Thou are aware, Ulrike, that there are heavy issues between me and the brotherhood concerning certain dues, not only in the valley, but on the plain, and that the contest fairly settled in my favor will much increase my revenues. Now were this unhappy dissension decided as I could wish, it would not only be in my power, but it would become my wish, to bestow such grace on all my principal followers, and on none so much as on Berchthold, as might leave a favorable opinion of my bounty. We want but this affair rightly settled to possess the means of winning Heinrich to our desires."

"Could this be honestly done, my blessing on him that shall effect it!"

"I rejoice to hear thee say this, good Ulrike.

Thou, of all others, mayest be most useful in the matter. Heinrich and I have well nigh decided on the fitness of disturbing the monks in their riotous abominations"——

"The words are strong, when applied to professed Benedictines!"

"By the holy Magi! they are more than merited. Here, has not the day twice turned since I had Bonifacius himself weltering in wine beneath the roof of Hartenburg, an' he had been a roisterer of a suburb! Bonifacius, Limburg's Abbot, have I seen in this unfit condition, Frau Ulrike, within mine own good castle walls!"

"And in thine own good castle company, Herr Emich?"

"Dost thou make no difference between Baron and Monk? Am I a sworn professor of godliness, a shaven crown, or one that looketh to be accounted better than his fellows? That I am noble is the chance of fortune, and as such I receive and profit by the advantage, though, I trust, always in fitting reason; but no man can say that Emich of Leiningen pretends aught to the especial virtues of a monkish character. We that are modest may claim to indulge our failings, but justice should heavily visit him that sins under a cloak of sanctity."

"I know not that thy exception may avail thee in the end. But thou wouldest say something to Berchthold Hintermayer's advantage?—"

"That would I, and right heartily. Could Heinrich be brought to a firm mind, that I might count on the support of the townsmen, these reprobates in cowls should be quickly disposed of; and, as of necessity, my dues would be much augmented, by clothing Berchthold with a deputy's authority over the recovered fields and villages, he should so gain in men's respect, as to soften the reluctance of the hardest-hearted Burgomaster in all Germany."

"And in what manner dost thou look to me, in effecting this object?"

"One of thy understanding need scarce put the question. Thou hast been long a wife, Ulrike, and art skilled in the persuasions of thy sex. I know not thy practice with Heinrich; but when Ermengarde would have her way, spite of her husband's inclinations, she has various manners of coming to her wishes. To-day she is smiling, to-morrow silent; now she fondles, and then she frowns; and, most of all, is she ready in seizing the moments of idle confidence to press on my unprepared reason the arguments of kisses and coquetry."

"It were idle to say I do not understand you, Herr von Hartenburg. I wish not to raise the curtain of your domestic confidence, nor do I feel disposed that any should presume to lift mine. Heinrich and I pursue our several ways, as each deems right, though, I trust, always with the harmony of wedded interests, and I am little practised in the influence you mention. But, dear as Meta is to the heart of her mother—and surely no shoot from the parent stem ever gave fonder hopes, or justified more tender regard"—Ulrike folded her hands, and turned her meek blue eyes to heaven—"much as I esteem young Berchthold, who is the child of my youth's nearest friend; and gladly as I would see their young hearts for ever bound up in the same ties of family concord and matrimonial love, the common parents of lisping laughing babes that should cluster at my knee, giving the evening of life some compensation for the chill of its noon-tide—rather than aid thee in this unhallowed design; rather than do aught, even in rebellious thought, against the altars of my God; rather than set my selfishness in array against his dread power, or fancy wish of mine can prove excuse for sacrilege —I could follow the girl to her grave, with a

tearless eye, and place my own head by her side, without regret for that calm decline which, when the weary probation of life is ended, Heaven grants to the deserving."

The Count of Leiningen recoiled at the energy with which his companion spoke; for none are so commanding as the mild when aroused to resistance, or so authoritative as the good when required to exhibit the beauty of their principles. He was disappointed; but, though a sort of instinct warned him that he had no further hopes of gaining the assistance of Ulrike, and, almost without knowing it himself, the respect which he had always entertained for his companion was increased. Taking the hand she extended to him, in amity, the moment her excitement had a little abated, he was about to reply, when a footstep in the adjoining room, and a timid tap at the door, interrupted him.

"Thou canst enter," said the Baron, believing that one of the castle maidens was without, and glad for the relief.

"A million of thanks for the honor," returned Ilse, curtsying to the floor as she availed herself of the privilege. "This is the first time so great a favor ever befell me in Hartenburg, though, when a girl, as it might be a ruddy maiden like our Meta, I once was admitted to a closet in Heidelburg. There was I, and the late Burgomaster, Ulrike's father, and the good wife, her mother, on a junketing, in our young days, to see the curiosities of the Elector's Palace, and we had visited the tun"——

"Thou art sent to seek me?" interrupted the mistress. "Hath Meta need of her mother?"

"That may be always said of a certainty, for girls of that age are like the young of the nest, Herr Count, who are ever in danger of breaking their necks, if they take a hasty flight, without the example of the old to give them prudence as well as

courage. Twenty times each day—I know not an' it be not fifty—do I say to our Meta, 'Do as thou wilt, child, an' thou dost nothing amiss.' I hold it to be wrongful to curb young humors so long as they are innocent; and therefore do I say, that kindness is a better rod than anger; and, in this reproving and chastening manner, Herr von Hartenburg, have I reared both Meta and her mother. Well, here you both are, in friendly communion, an' you were children of the same cradle!—and Heinrich Frey is yon, without, tasting the rhenish with the two churchmen that infect the castle"——

"Thou wouldst surely say frequent, good nurse."

"What matters a word, child! Infect or frequent are much the same, when one speaketh of the gentle and gay! I remember ye both young and handsome, and a pair that the whole town of Duerckheim said ought never to be parted; for if one was noble, the other was good; if one was strong and valiant, the other was fair and virtuous; but the ways of the world led ye on different paths, and Heaven forbid that I should say aught against ways that so many travel!"

"And thou hast left Meta with those that infect the castle, to come and say this?"

"Naught like it. It is true I let the girl listen to a few of their idle words, for without experience a maiden may not know when to repulse an improper freedom; but for any levity to escape my eye, were as impossible as for my Lord Count to fail in duty to the Limburg altars. No, I complain not of the stranger nobles; for while he of Rhodes did many gentle offices in behalf of Meta, the reverend Abbé held me in discourse touching this heresy of Luther, and, I warrant you, ecclesiastic as he is, he went not away the worse for my opinion of the schismatic! We had goodly discourse on the dangers and tribulations of the times, and might have had much

learning between us, but for young Berchthold, who fancied himself beating the forest, by the manner in which he threshed among the old armor of the hall, disturbing all present with the idle pretence of seeking a cross-bow for the Count's pleasure in the morning; as if the Herr Count would have hunted with less satisfaction because there were wise words uttered in his halls! The Hintermayers are a race I love, but this youth seemeth to be wanting of respect for years."

"And what hast done with my child?"

"Thou knowest it was thy desire she should say a few greetings to the fallen Lottchen; and when I thought the wandering cavalier had had his say, I beckoned the child away, in order that she might go to the hamlet on that errand. She will be none the worse for the discourse with that free cavalier, for naught so quickens virtue of the pure stamp as a little contamination with vice—it is like the base metal they put in gold, to make the precious ore hard and able to undergo many hands."

"Thou hast not suffered Meta to go unattended?"

"Didst ever know me fail in duty? Thy motherly heart is quick to take alarm, like the bird fluttering at each leaf that rustles. Not I, in sooth: I sent the vain Gisela to keep her company, and whispered our Meta well, as they departed, not to fail to draw instruction from her companion's light discourse, which, I will warrant, turns on naught else but the gallantries of these strangers. Oh! leave old Ilse to profit by any thing edifying that may turn up, in the way of accident! I that never yet lost a good moral for want of pushing an opportunity! and here stands Ulrike as proof of what I have done. I owe you excuses, Herr Emich, for sending away your forester; but the boy vexed me with his clatter among the shields and arquebuses, and, in order to give him a wholesome lesson in silence, I sent him

to see Meta safe to his mother's door, under the pretence of its being necessary to have a manly arm present, to beat off the barking curs of the hamlet."

"Does Heinrich know this?"

"In sooth, he is so beset with thy honor in being closeted with my Lord the Count, that he does little besides talk of it, and take his cup. When the child was thus cared for, by the one who first held her in arms, and one, too, whose experience is little short of threescore and fourteen, I saw not the necessity of calling him from his pleasures."

Ulrike smiled, and turning to the Count, who had been so much lost in thought as to give little heed to the words of the nurse, she offered him her hand, and they left the closet in company.

END OF VOL. I.